

Struggling Toward a New Earth:  
The Integration of Faith and Development Practice within  
Christian Aid, with particular reference to a Brazilian  
partner, *Centro de Estudos e Ação Social*.

A Thesis Submitted by  
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## Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis constitutes my own research and writing and it has not been submitted in any previous application for a degree. All quotations have been distinguished and the source of information acknowledged.

Thia Cooper  
29 February 2004

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## List of Abbreviations

BEC	Base Ecclesial Community
C&C	Church and Community
CA	Christian Aid
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CEAS	<i>Centro de Estudos e Ação Social</i> (Centre for Studies and Social Action)
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CONDER	Company for Urban Development in the State of Bahia
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DfID	Department for International Development
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GRA	Global Regulatory Authority
ID	International Department
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MST	<i>Movimento Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra</i> (Rural Landless Workers' Movement)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SCAC	Scottish Christian Aid Committee
TLDG	Theology Lunchtime Discussion Group
TNCs	Transnational Corporations
TWG	Theology Working Group
WDR	World Development Report
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## Abstract

This thesis addresses the following question: what is the Christian contribution that a faith-based agency such as Christian Aid brings to development practice. It explores the integration of theological reflection with development work and advocacy in two faith-based organisations: Christian Aid (CA), a UK relief and development organisation and one of its overseas partners, *Centro de Estudos e Ação Social* (CEAS), a Brazilian Jesuit-based community development organisation. Such a question has been overlooked by many people working within development in the North but is often central to agencies in the South.

Stemming from liberation theology, this thesis argues that the practice of these organisations is both developmental (economic, political, and cultural) and theological. It analyses two components arising out of the integration of faith and development. The first component is the methodology of action and reflection, the hermeneutic circle, that these organisations follow. The second is the content, the issues, emerging from the reflection.

The first chapter analyses the method of the hermeneutic circle. This circle critically reflects in community on reality and spirituality, each in the light of the other. This thesis followed a similar method in its formation. The practice and reflection of CA and CEAS were considered through participant observation in both organisations with subsequent theological reflection.

The following chapters explore the movement through the hermeneutic circle. First is the analysis of reality. CA's acceptance of the development paradigm and globalisation is explored through its current focus: a campaign for fairer international trade. CEAS, in contrast, rejects economic development and globalisation. It focuses on the political realm encouraging the poorest communities to struggle with the local government, building their capacity as citizens. CA supporters also consider alternatives to development and globalisation, focusing on the local rather than the global and on the political as well as the economic realm.

From this reality, theological themes emerge. CA and CEAS contextualise their work in the struggle toward God's kingdom, a new earth. The goal of this struggle is justice, which requires that community be prioritised over the individual and the poor be prioritised over the rich. For CEAS and some CA supporters, prioritising the poor includes reducing the wealth of the rich, understood to be both structures and individuals.

Differences emerge in the praxis of these organisations, stemming from the question of how far toward God's new earth (and the end of development) people are to work now. The tension between the present and the future causes some confusion and disagreement. This tension includes the balance between consumption and citizenship, the economic and political realms. The hermeneutic circle aids consideration of this tension as it constantly acts, reflects on that action, and develops further praxis from this reflection. Liberation theology, by continuing to reflect on this praxis in communities of the poorest, can build further on these emerging themes. In these ways, the faith-based contribution to development practice can be clarified and deepened.

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Cynthia Cooper.

## Introduction

### 1. The Question

What is the difference that Christianity produces in development work? What is the Christian contribution that an agency such as Christian Aid (CA) brings to development practice?

In 1987, Charles Elliott, a former director of CA, wrote

‘One of the oddities of the whole story is that the modernisation<sup>1</sup> paradigm was never subjected to serious theological critique. Indeed, the theological work undertaken by the development agencies is most noticeable for its absence or low quality. For the development activists regarded theology as irrelevant. The tragedy is that, given the kind of theology that was being written and debated in most metropolitan countries, they were quite right. It had to wait for various strands of thought that are usually lumped under the umbrella of liberation theology to appear- significantly, from the developing world itself before theology had anything significant to say concerning what was going on.’ (Elliott 1987, 45)

This quote, by a person who has been involved with Christian development agencies for many years, introduces well the context in which I situate the discussion of theology and development. First, there are many Christian aid agencies involved in development practice around the world. Second, it is not always made clear how the Christian aspect of these agencies differentiates their development practice from secular agencies. Third, those involved in development work, particularly in the North<sup>2</sup>, often do not see the point of integrating theology or spirituality and development. Fourth, those working in many Southern countries do not have a formal separation between their faith and other aspects of their lives. Their development practice includes spiritual elements and their theology includes economic and political elements. This overt mixture provides a useful means of comparison. The example used by Elliot in this quote is that of liberation theology, which has grown out of the practice and reflection of Christians in Latin America. It is from this theological perspective that this thesis too proceeds.

I have chosen to begin the discussion with two excerpts from my fieldwork diaries in order to give a picture of the context in which this thesis is written. One community in Brazil is struggling to survive, finding its place in the global situation and analysing and critiquing this situation and ways to move forward from its faith base. It is

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<sup>1</sup> See the glossary for a definition of modernisation.

<sup>2</sup> See the glossary for definitions of the North and the South.

funded by several agencies, including CA here in the UK. CA is a larger community of development practitioners and UK churches trying to encourage and act alongside communities, like *Centro de Estudos e Ação Social* (CEAS), around the world in their struggle for a new earth. Because CA is such a large organisation, reference can be made to only one of its overseas partners and to only one of its offices in the UK regions, Scotland. The remainder of the reflection comes from the central office in London. The fieldwork, which forms the basis of this thesis, occurred in the UK and in Brazil between November 1999 and November 2002.

Stemming from liberation theology, this thesis argues that the practice of these organisations is both developmental (economic, political, and cultural) and theological. The project of integrating these two foci is analysed for two components. The first component is the content, the issues emerging, and the second is the methodology of action and reflection these organisations use to improve the lives of those in the world's poorest communities. As Elliott pointed out, there has been little theological reflection on the part of Christian development agencies in the North. That which emerges from CA during the period of the research reflects themes prominent in liberation theology. Yet some hesitancy remains about how to incorporate the reflection into policy. These themes and their integration with practice can then be compared to those emerging from one of CA's partners, CEAS, working in the context in which liberation theology initially developed. Together the findings can show ways in which Christianity contributes to the practice of these agencies. It can also point a way forward for further merging of theology and development practice.

The Edinburgh excerpt describes an interview with Daleep Mukarji, the current director of CA, at a meeting of the Scottish Christian Aid Committee (SCAC). This committee is made up of representatives from churches throughout Scotland and of CA staff. Its purpose is to ensure communication between CA and its supporting churches in Scotland on the development and theological issues important to CA's work. There, Mukarji describes his understanding of CA's roots in both UK Christianity and in partnership with organisations around the world in the practice of development and advocacy work.

The Brazilian excerpt is set in one of the local communities with which CEAS works in the city of Salvador. It is of a residents' association meeting where they were planning for a visit to the community by local media groups. This association meets twice a month in an ongoing effort to improve the lives of those in the community as they struggle to retain the right to the land on which they live and to demand provision of

basic services by the local government. CEAS, with funding from CA, provides advice to this community and a means of networking with other communities involved in similar struggles in the city of Salvador and its surroundings.

The experience of these two communities will be elaborated upon throughout the thesis. This will help to answer the question of how they contribute to the integration of theology, particularly liberation theology, and development.

## 2. Setting the Scene

### 2.1 'Talk fast because I am hungry': Fieldwork diary: Salvador, Brazil- July 24, 2001

At the end of a wide paved road, overlooking the ocean, we climbed down a set of concrete steps under a busy carriageway and onto a dirt path. At the bottom, in the moonlight, Rita Santa Rita, the co-ordinator of CEAS, and I carefully made our way along the underside of the bridge, through rubble, to a community of 250 families called Gamboa de Baixo.



Figure One: Gamboa da Baixo.

CEAS has worked with this community for several years, first in their fight to keep ownership of the land on which they live and now providing advice on building their capacity to interact with the local government. The World Bank<sup>3</sup> provided funding for the restoration of the area for tourism and, although the government wanted to relocate the residents to the outskirts of the city, advisors found a clause in the document, which required the government to provide accommodation for the residents in the same place. Although the community is adjacent to the tourist centre, it is seen as a separate entity into which the tourists do not venture due to the perception of violence and poverty and the fact that it is effectively cut off from the rest of the city physically. The situation is still extremely tense.

The squelching of our sandals in the mud was disturbing as a strong stench of sewage rose up from the ground. I could just make out the ocean at the bottom with a few fishing boats moored there but even the sea air could not mask the smell. Here and there were long ropes tied from solid objects at the top of the cliff around trees at varying levels because the rains can wash the trees down the steep slope crushing everything in their paths. One house had been destroyed recently and there was a death from a similar incident in the previous year. We walked past several concrete shells of houses and came to small open area with a payphone, a stall of traditional Bahian foods, and the smell of palm oil in the air. Preta<sup>4</sup>, a woman in the late stages of pregnancy, ran the stall. Several people walked by, nearly all a mixture of African, Native American, and European descent, including a thin 13 year old girl, holding her young baby.

We made our way down the steep path to the house where the meeting was held, walking down 10 steps into a cement patio area with a plastic table and chairs. There were several plants along the outside edge and what seemed to be a hole in the corner, however people climbed up and down from it. I believe it led to another house below.

The meeting was of the residents' association. There were five women and one man present for the entire meeting but others came in and out. This group meets twice a month to discuss problems in the community and to co-ordinate action on the issues raised. They vary the location of the meeting, so that the same person is not hosting all of the time but not all of the residents have either the chairs or the space for everyone. Before the meeting started, the discussion was of the anti-globalisation protests in Italy, supporting the protest and condemning the death of one of the protestors.

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<sup>3</sup> For further information on this organisation see [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org).

<sup>4</sup> The names of the people from the communities CEAS works with in Salvador have been changed.

The main item on the agenda was to finalise the plans for a photographic walkabout. They invited photographers and reporters from newspapers, magazines and radio stations to spend a day visiting the community in order for the media to view first hand what life is like for the residents. Usually the perceptions of the press stem from police reports and government information, which is negative. The residents spent some time creating captions for the promotional material. One caption stated: 'from here I am not leaving; from here no one can take me away,' describing their ongoing fight to remain a community in the face of the government's tourist ambitions. Another said 'watch out people, here comes *Via Náutica*,' the tourism plan by a company called CONDER and the local government to build a pier through the community for boats to embark and disembark close to the main road above. The pier would destroy part of the community and at the same time would continue to keep tourists 'safe' from the community, bypassing them to enter the centre of the city directly.

They also planned the agenda for the debate that will begin the day. This led to a conversation about their problems with the police. The women in particular fear attacks by the police and also fear for their safety in general. Last week, about 40 masked people in police uniforms came into the community and assaulted several residents. The residents told the newspapers what had happened, including the license plate number of one of the cars in which the people had arrived but nothing was reported. Three of the residents ended up in hospital. Maria told the story of one mother whose son is involved in the drugs trade. She said the police are unable do anything about the son, so they beat up the mother and the other son, a 10 year old boy with mental health problems. They also took money and her watch from her. There is a lack of structural support for the community from the police, the media and the local government. The police add to the violence while the government refuses to provide basic services.

In the face of this grim conversation, they still managed to laugh and smile together. At one point Andres held up a piece of paper that said 'talk fast because I'm hungry.' Everyone laughed and Santa Rita passed around a plate with slices of bread with butter that she had bought from a bakery on the way to the meeting. Thus, the serious talk ended and the second part of the meeting, a dinner of bread and butter together began. When the last slice was gone, the meeting concluded and several of the residents walked us to the edge of the community, where we again clambered up the steep steps in the dark to the main road...

2.2 'Getting involved is part of the Christian witness': Fieldwork diary, Edinburgh, UK- November 14, 2002

I entered the church on George IV Bridge, soaked and cold from the short walk in the Edinburgh rain, and spent the next several minutes in the foyer drinking tea, and catching up with several CA staff and SCAC members. We made our way into the congregation where the chairs and tables were arranged in a square for the 30 participants. There were a mixture of men and women mainly white and between the ages of 40 and 60, representing the sponsoring churches in Scotland and the three Scottish CA offices.<sup>5</sup> The main portion of the morning was devoted to an interview with Mukarji, CA's director. He is a tall Indian man in his 50s, a medical doctor by training. He was the head of one of CA's partners in India for several years before moving to the World Council of Churches<sup>6</sup> and then CA. Two of the committee members posed the first questions with others adding to the discussion.

The first interviewer asked how CA distinguishes itself from other UK aid agencies. Mukarji said that its unique factor is that it is the churches' relief and development agency. It is owned by and rooted in the churches. They 'make it possible for us to do our work.' He is proud of being inspired by the Gospel in this way. Because of this rooting, CA takes the biblical, theological, and missiological dimensions of its work seriously. This does not mean the goal is to make people Christian or to help only Christians. However, it is to act from a Christian basis because the Gospel says that 'Christians are to share the love of Jesus' because 'all are made in God's image.'

Mukarji continued that CA considers it a privilege to work with partners overseas, which consists of identifying local groups to fund, like CEAS, which it hopes to 'be inspired by.' When asked how CA was maintaining its focus on overseas partners, Mukarji said that partners still receive 75% of the income of CA. This is for them to do development and advocacy work in their own countries. In addition, there is now up to 15% spent on education, policy, and campaigning in the UK and internationally. He said that developing countries do not want aid, they want to be part of international trade, to be able to participate in the global trading system. That is one of the reasons for the new campaign 'Trade for Life'.

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<sup>5</sup> These churches include the Baptist Union of Scotland, Church of Scotland, Congregational Federation in Scotland, Methodist Church in Scotland, Religious Society of Friends, Scottish Episcopal Church, Salvation Army, Scottish Unitarian Association, United Free Church of Scotland, and the United Reformed Church. The Scottish CA team has offices in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth.

<sup>6</sup> For further information on this organisation see [www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/english.html](http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/english.html).

Another person asked whether CA supporters wanted their money to be spent on advocacy work like the campaign rather than aid. Mukarji said that this is a challenge for an organisation like CA. It has to accept churches and supporters where they are. There are long-time supporters who have confidence in CA and understand that ‘you can’t handle the symptoms without looking at the root causes’ of poverty. However, others may not be aware of the larger issues, such as the fact that ‘what you buy in the shops has an impact,’ as does ‘how you invest your money.’ This is where the worship and Bible study material should help to show the links to wider issues.

People can begin to engage with CA at the level of providing money for relief work and then move on to understand development and finally advocacy, Mukarji continued. It is a process. ‘For Christians, getting involved in the concerns of this world is not political and the church has a huge heritage in this area.’ As Christians have been involved in prison reform, poverty eradication in the UK, and in civil rights movements in America, for example, why would it not be natural to look at poverty issues around the world inspired by faith? Every human being is created in God’s image with needs and rights. CA is not apologetic for campaigning. There is a need to challenge people to ‘stand up, speak out, take sides.’ That is the prophetic role of the churches.

The CA constitutional mandate is

- to expose the scandal of poverty,
- to contribute to the eradication of poverty by the partners, and
- to challenge the structures and systems.

‘Getting involved is part of the Christian witness.’ There is no point in only funding development projects, international and economic systems also have to be influenced. Clare Short, former UK Secretary of State for International Development, said once that it is the middle classes who are trying to ‘do good’ in Third World countries, but Mukarji thinks it is more than this; it is the ‘faith-base’ taking action.

### 3. Christian Aid and CEAS: Faith-Based Agencies Working Together in the Context of Development

CA is a UK-based relief and development agency, which funds agencies indigenous to the overseas countries, like CEAS, rather than managing its own overseas projects. Set up after the Second World War by 40 UK churches, representing many of the non-Catholic denominations, CA initially focused on providing aid to 'refugees and churches in Europe.' (Mukarji 2000, 1) It later expanded its funding to organisations across the globe. From the broadest perspective, it can be seen in the middle of two arms, to which the interview with Mukarji alludes. On one side, it has been set up by these UK churches including those involved in the SCAC. It is this link to the UK churches that makes CA distinctive from other UK agencies for Mukarji. On the other side, it funds and interacts with many secular and faith-based partners, like CEAS, in countries around the world. CA has to balance these two arms within the organisation.

Each department at CA tends to focus on either the UK churches or the partners. For example, the international department is the locus for all connections between CA and its partners overseas. It is made up of regional teams, such as the Latin America and Caribbean team, and the Global Advocacy team, which creates CA policy on development issues. The church and community (C&C) department, on the other hand, is made up of UK regional teams, such as the Scottish team and the Churches team, which link to the UK churches. Finally, the Campaigns Team is located in the external relations department. This department focuses on CA's face in the public realm in the UK. It seeks 'to significantly increase profile, influence, impact and income, as well as support for campaigning and other actions, in ways that show that we are (a) value-based faith-led, respected, forward thinking organisation which is relevant to the poor.' (Christian Aid 2000b, 12) In planning their campaign, this team has to integrate both arms of CA through the other departments.

This formal separation tends to cause a different understanding of the role of CA, depending on what staff member, UK churchgoer, or overseas partner is consulted. To a large extent there is also a separation of Christian and secular staff into the different departments. Ian Linden, a Professorial Research Associate at SOAS and former general secretary of the Catholic Institute for International Relations, notes that while the international and external relations departments have a majority of non-Christian staff members the C&C department is the opposite. The different foci and delineation of Christian and secular staff lead to two formulations of CA's purpose.

- The first is that CA is there to ‘help the Churches make an adequate (Gospel) response to the world’s poorest communities.’ (Linden 1999, 2) This view tends to come from the C&C department as the thesis will explore.
- The second is that CA is there to ‘support the world’s poorest communities to struggle for life and for justice.’ (2) This view emerges from the International department.

While Mukarji stressed both sides in his interview with the SCAC, questions continue to arise. If the link to the churches is limited to the C&C department, as is the Christian staff, does this then mean that the Christian aspect of CA is limited to this department or to its work with the UK churches? There are no staff members in the International Department responsible for theological or faith-based reflection and no theological reflection emerges from this department. Yet, some CA staff members argue that there is a process of action (development practice) and reflection based in liberation theology that occurs throughout the organisation informally.

This thesis examines the situation at both ends of the spectrum starting with the new campaign on trade from the perspective of the C&C department as it interacts with the UK churches and then from the perspective of one overseas partner in Brazil. The Campaigns team merges the two aspects of CA’s purpose in its development of the campaign on trade. It garners the campaign policy from the International department and then builds links between this policy and Christian principles with the C&C department. The campaign aims to change elements within the international economic system based on CA policy. Much of the theological reflection on trade emerges from the C&C department as the second and third chapters explore.

The fieldwork on which this thesis is based moves between the two arms that support the organisation and the main office in London. The concept of partnership implies a conversation between CA policy and practice, partner policy and practice, and UK church policy and practice. In London, the fieldwork focused on the C&C department to find the locus of theological reflection. The work then expanded out to staff in the campaigns and global advocacy teams as they set out to integrate issues of trade and globalisation with faith. To analyse the UK church arm, the fieldwork focused on the Scottish team and its links with the Scottish churches, as the excerpt introduced. To analyse the partner arm, the fieldwork focused on CEAS, in particular its urban team, funded by CA, which focuses on the poorest communities in and around Salvador.

Many of CA’s overseas partners are faith-based too, often related to the Christian denominations in the UK. Roger Riddell, the head of the International Team who writes

on aid and development,<sup>7</sup> stated that although they work with partners regardless of their faith base, they ‘are committed to working with churches and church agencies to support those who are poor, recognising CA’s role within the ecumenical family.’ (Christian Aid 2001a, 23) I have focused on one of these faith-based partners in Brazil.

CA began funding agencies in Brazil in the 1970s. In 1964, there was a military coup and political dissent was not allowed under the military dictatorship. The military government also intensified the focus on economic development.<sup>8</sup> Many Brazilians, therefore, associate economic development, which they now describe as neoliberalism,<sup>9</sup> with a repressive dictatorship or an unresponsive government. The Catholic Church provided a space for political discussion and action. Liberation theology and the practice of agencies like CEAS grew directly out of the context of critiquing development. CA’s funding was a means of ‘showing solidarity and providing financial support to churches, Base Christian communities<sup>10</sup> and grassroots organisations,’ as they worked to provide alternatives for improving the situation of the poorest communities in Brazil. (Luz<sup>11</sup> 2000, 14-5)

CA continued to support these organisations after the return to a more democratic rule began in Brazil in 1984. The work still involves ‘struggles for human rights and popular participation, working through the ecumenical and the new social movements.’ (Luz 2000, 15) Brazilian agencies are working to ensure the new democracy becomes relevant to the daily lives of Brazilian citizens. CA focuses on ‘the popular sectors committed to the eradication of poverty and the unequal reality through the processes which build citizenship and solidarity and guarantee economic, social, cultural, civil, political, and environmental rights.’ (2) Ending poverty and encouraging citizenship remain two crucial goals. As the Brazilian excerpt reveals, communities are still learning how to interact with the government to demand responsiveness to community goals and needs.

CEAS, the Centre for Studies and Social Action, is the agency chosen for this part of the research. It is based in Salvador, a city in the state of Bahia, in the Northeast of Brazil, the poorest region in the country.<sup>12</sup> CA has funded the urban team of CEAS

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<sup>7</sup> See Riddell 1987 for example.

<sup>8</sup> This situation is explored further in the fourth chapter. See Chaffee 1998, particularly the seventh chapter “Growth, Legitimacy and Inflation” for detailed examination of development under the military government.

<sup>9</sup> See the glossary for a definition of neoliberalism.

<sup>10</sup> See the glossary for a definition of Base Christian or Ecclesial Communities (BECs).

<sup>11</sup> Mara Luz was formerly Brazil Programme Officer in the CA International Department.

<sup>12</sup> See the appendix for maps of Brazil and the city of Salvador.

since 1988. According to CA, CEAS is an agency that 'aims to do educational work with organisations of the poor, strengthening and co-ordinating them and also provides a service of advice, advocacy and support to urban groups in Salvador, state of Bahia, Brazil.' ("CEAS", 1) Thus, CA views CEAS in the context of advocacy work with the poorest communities. It wants to strengthen 'the contribution made by civil society'<sup>13</sup> in the fight for a better quality of life in rural and urban areas.' (Luz 2000, 20) Focusing on building the capacity of the poorest communities (like that of Gamboa described above) to participate effectively in civil and political society, CEAS' work aims for the communities' self-empowerment.

CEAS was set up in 1967, by a group of Jesuits, in response to the military coup. Rejecting the government focus on economic development, CEAS responds to requests from the poorest communities themselves. For example, in the Gamboa community, it provides support and advice in their fight to remain on the coastal land. The communities set their own goals and CEAS facilitates the process of meeting these goals.

The urban team of CEAS focuses on seven areas, although only the first two will be detailed in this thesis. They are:

1. the absence of public policies to ensure the basic daily rights and infrastructure in the slums, as the Gamboa excerpt elaborated;
2. deficiency of the State in attending to the constitutional right to pre-school (ages 5-7), as the second community studied will show;
3. violations of human rights;
4. racial tensions<sup>14</sup>;
5. abandoned children and youth;
6. HIV+ homeless people; and finally,

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<sup>13</sup> See the glossary for a definition of civil society. This term is considered further in the fourth chapter. For analysis of this concept in relation to development see Van Rooy 2002.

<sup>14</sup> While race is not discussed separately in this thesis, it is a basic element in any discussion of poverty. This is particularly true in the Northeast of Brazil as the richest tend to be the whitest and the poorest, the darkest. Seven out of 10 Bahians describe themselves as mixed race (*pardo*: brown), 1 in 10 black (*preto*), and 2 in 10 white (*branco*). (Kraay 1998, 8) The mixture of races includes those of native American descent, those of African descent, originally imported as slaves, and those of white descent, mainly Portuguese. A backlash against the negativity associated with black culture is emerging. Father Alfredo de Souza Dorea, a Jesuit priest working with CEAS, is of mixed heritage but he describes himself as black, as does Santa Rita. This is a deliberate choice because Brazilians used to say that the 'race mixture would eventually lead to the disappearance of blacks,' a process of whitening. (16) Now people accent their cultural heritage by using the word *negro* (black), taking it back from its pejorative usage. It has become 'valorized as the mark of a new Afro-Brazilian identity, as opposed to *preto* (also black) or anyone of several 'polite' terms that gloss over African ancestry.' (22-3) For further analysis of the issue of race in Bahia, see Sansone 1997.

7. relations between the communities and prostitutes, washwomen, and maids<sup>15</sup>. There is also a rural team (focusing on the issue of land), an editorial team (which produces a journal every two months), and a group working on events, including a monthly debate on issues important to the communities such as gender, race, and water privatisation<sup>16</sup>. Finally, CEAS has a Documentation Centre, which collects papers, articles, and other material relevant to the communities.

Part of the Brazilian fieldwork focused on a group of teachers on Itaparica Island, a 45 minute boat journey from the coast of the city of Salvador. The island is famed for its beaches and the main form of employment is tourism. The government will only fund primary school on this island (ages 8-12), although children also have a constitutional right to pre-school. Several churches and other organisations have set up eight pre-schools on the island. Yet problems remain. The teachers in these schools are not well trained and the local government will not assume financial responsibility for the pre-schools. With the advice and support of CEAS, this community of teachers is trying to push for recognition from the government. It is also forming links to the primary school teachers on the island and working to improve the methods of teaching. The fourth chapter details this situation further.

There are four issues emerging from the context of the poorest who form the majority of the population in Brazil.<sup>17</sup> Joviniano Neto, one of the board members at CEAS and a professor of Political Science, describes them as follows:

- The first element is economic poverty and unemployment where people literally struggle for their 'daily bread' (*pão de cada dia*). (Neto 2001, 9) CEAS cannot focus on employment as a solution because there are no jobs to be found. 'It's no use to speak of teaching to fish when the person doesn't have a rod, the fish-hook doesn't have a worm and the river is polluted.'<sup>18</sup> (9<sup>19</sup>) For example, although the Gamboa community sits alongside the tourist area of the city, the residents do not conform to the image that the tourist industry wants to present to its visitors, due to the lack of access to health care, education, and other services.

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<sup>15</sup> Gender is another major factor in the discussion of poverty. The majority of the poorest are non-white women. Only one member of the residents' association in Gamboa is male and the group of community school teachers described in the fourth chapter is entirely female. More than 30% of families in Latin America are headed by women and in urban areas of Brazil the number is even higher. (Macêdo 2001)

<sup>16</sup> See the glossary for a definition of privatisation.

<sup>17</sup> See the fourth chapter for statistics on employment, poverty and other aspects of life in the city of Salvador.

<sup>18</sup> '*Não adianta falar em ensinar a pescar quando o indivíduo não tem vara, o anzol não tem minhoca e o rio está poluído, sem peixes.*'

<sup>19</sup> Neto is quoting Dom Gilio Felício, Assistant Bishop of the Archdiocese of São Salvador.

- The second element, then, is the lack of these public services and the lack of a basic urban infrastructure including health care, access to schools, transport, phones, water and electricity. Addressing these problems, part of a political poverty, is the main focus of CEAS. It criticises the fact that many of these services have been privatised taking them further out of the reach of those without money.
- The third element is that of criminality and violence, as the conversation in the Gamboa community starkly showed. There is violence associated with drugs and the political and police repression that is mainly against the poor.
- Finally, there is the religious and moral crisis. The values promoted by the Catholic church including solidarity in community, commitment to the poor, and helping one's neighbour are attacked by the media. The media promotes 'modernisation,' which includes consumerism, competition, pleasure, and no need for social responsibility. In this view, the poor are responsible for their own poverty. They are unemployable, lacking qualifications and competitiveness. Neto quotes Cain in Exodus 4:9, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' Neoliberalism answers, 'You are not responsible for the problems of others.'<sup>20</sup> (Neto 2001, 11) CEAS rejects this view entirely.

These four elements form a different context to that of the church communities in the UK working with CA. The UK church communities supporting CA are, in the majority, not located amongst the poor.<sup>21</sup> In contrast, CEAS and Christianity in Brazil in general are. Yet, there are similarities, particularly in reconciling the values promoted in the churches and those promoted in the media, as the following chapters elaborate. From their differing perspectives, both arms of CA, along with its main office, are working toward the same goals of eradicating poverty and changing the structures that keep people poor.

There is not much direct communication between the two supporting arms of CA, except for partner visits to the UK regions and visits by UK staff members to partner organisations. These occur regularly but do not form a consistent communication link. Instead, communication between the Brazilian partners and CA moves through the Brazil Programme Officer in the International department, mainly in the form of applications for funding and yearly reports. There is also a general Communications Officer for projects in Latin America and the Caribbean. There is no

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<sup>20</sup> 'Você não é responsável pelos problemas dos outros.'

<sup>21</sup> Those that are, however, could form a fertile location for introducing the hermeneutic circle in the UK context.

format in place for regular theological or policy related discussion between the partner and CA or the UK churches. Thus, the integration of communication between UK churches, CA, and overseas partners has to be conducted within the main office in London, in cross-organisational work between the departments. The main format for faith-based discussion is the Theology Working Group (TWG), detailed in the following chapters.

Integrating the perspectives of two such different communities is not a simple matter, as the thesis shows. However, there are methodologies and themes emerging from both that can form the basis for further integration of spirituality and development. Although the UK churches are reflecting mainly from their location amongst the middle class churchgoers and CEAS is reflecting from its location amongst the poorest, both are dealing with an analysis of the current global economic and political situations from a faith perspective.

### 3.1 A definition of development

It is important to situate both CA and CEAS in the current context of development.<sup>22</sup> This contextualisation will then help to answer the question of how Christianity makes a difference to the practice of these organisations. The term development is used throughout this thesis to describe the work of CA and to a certain extent that of CEAS, although the word itself is rejected by CEAS. Thus, it has to be carefully defined.

Development is an ambiguous term that tends to be defined according to what people want to occur rather than what is actually occurring in practice. Gilbert Rist, a professor in development, describes such definitions as wish lists. Before providing his own definition of development, he argues that definitions have to meet certain conditions. 'For a definition to be operational,' it has to 'eliminate all 'preconceptions'.' (Rist 1997, 9) It has to describe the situation, not what it hopes the term will mean. Then it has to 'base itself upon certain 'external characteristics' common to all phenomena within the group in question.' (9-10) CA, as will be shown in the second chapter, defines development according to what it hopes will occur: poverty reduction alongside economic growth.

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<sup>22</sup> The full history of the concept of development cannot be detailed in this thesis. For such an analysis from a Western perspective, see Cowen and Shenton 1996. To understand the full spectrum of ideas considered to be related to development see Sachs 1992 for analysis of 19 concepts surrounding the discussion of development.

In contrast, the word is not used by CEAS to describe their work because what it has done on the ground is not what they are working toward. Rist offers the following starting point for a true definition of development.

‘Development’ consists of a set of practices, sometimes appearing to conflict with one another, which require- for the reproduction of society- the general transformation and destruction of the natural environment and of social relations. Its aim is to increase the production of commodities (goods and services) geared, by way of exchange, to effective demand.’ (Rist 1997, 13)

This destruction of the environment and of communities is not the stated goal of the practice of development. However, it is the outcome of the focus on economic matters: production, demand, and trade.

The verb ‘to develop’ does not have this negative meaning historically. It can also mean ‘to cause to unfold gradually’ or even ‘to become gradually manifest.’<sup>23</sup> Development then, should be ‘the act, process or result of developing.’ It does not always have to be associated with growth and should not be limited to the economic realm. The question is whether the term must be discarded or whether changes can be made in how development is implemented so that the wish lists can become reality.

Many practitioners do not think that such a change is possible and have begun to work with a new concept, post-development.<sup>24</sup> The first characteristic of post-development is a rejection of the neutrality of the concept of development, as Rist’s discussion clearly shows. Its effects have to be taken into consideration. Second, post-development coalesces around the following idea:

that ‘a middle class, ‘Western style’ of life and all that goes with it (which might include the nuclear family, mass consumption, suburbanization<sup>25</sup> and extensive private space), is not a realistic or desirable goal for the majority of the world’s population.’ (Sidaway 2002, 16)

Here, the focus on constantly increasing economic supply and demand, promoted by the West, is rejected. In particular, other cultural spheres beyond the West have to be allowed to choose their own foci. Beyond these two elements, post-development encompasses several different types of change, often focused on the local, as explored

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<sup>23</sup> See [www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com) for further definitions.

<sup>24</sup> For further analysis of this concept, see Sidaway 2002.

<sup>25</sup> Throughout this thesis, quotes will come from sources published in the USA, using the American spellings of words. Rather than point each one out they will be accepted and left in tact.

throughout the thesis. In fact, post-development emphasises the need for heterogeneity rather than homogeneity in the changes.

Having briefly defined development and post-development it remains to situate CA and CEAS in this context. CA is a Northern Non-Governmental Organisation (NNGO) [also called Civil Society Organisation (CSO)], which funds overseas partners to carry out relief, development work and advocacy, while it focuses on advocacy here in the North. CA still accepts the concept of development and works to achieve the outcomes of poverty reduction and economic growth, while acknowledging that there are problems of implementation at a global level. CEAS, in contrast, is a CSO working within a context of post-development, providing advice and advocacy to local community groups. It has rejected the concept of development.

Here in the UK, there are many NNGOs, which focus on relief and development, aiming for poverty reduction. Some, like CAFOD (Catholic Agency for Overseas Development),<sup>26</sup> are faith-based. Others, like Oxfam,<sup>27</sup> are secular relief and development agencies, which draw support from churches in the UK but are not owned by any particular church. These types of agencies fund projects and agencies overseas. Some NNGOs also set up their own projects overseas with UK staff. CA only sends staff overseas when indigenous agencies are not yet mobilised due to recent war or other disruptive events.

Relief work, as the term implies, focuses on relieving an emergency situation. Examples include funding Ethiopian agencies to deal with a famine, or funding Mozambican agencies to provide relief after severe flooding. Some NNGOs focus solely on this type of work.

Development work is broader in scope and the division between development work and advocacy can be unclear. Assuming it aims to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth, as CA argues, development work could include helping people to purchase animals for a micro-business. It can also include a movement like the *Movimento Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST- Rural Landless Workers' Movement)<sup>28</sup> in Brazil, which helps landless people to claim unused land for farming. However, the work of an organisation like the MST has political, social and economic implications. It moves into the realm of advocacy because although claiming the land

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<sup>26</sup> For further information on this organisation see [www.cafod.org](http://www.cafod.org).

<sup>27</sup> For further information on this organisation see [www.oxfam.org](http://www.oxfam.org).

<sup>28</sup> For further information on this organisation see [www.mstbrazil.org](http://www.mstbrazil.org).

for use is already legal, there is still a need to ensure the government enforces the regulation, as landowners do not want to give it up.

Advocacy work takes place both in the UK and abroad. As Mukarji said to the SCAC, it is trying to change the structures that govern the way economic, political, and cultural processes occur to make them more focused on poverty reduction. The CA trade campaign is a large-scale example detailed in this thesis. CEAS too is placed under the aspect of advocacy as it aims to change the structures that govern people's daily lives through its advice to the poorest communities. While working toward poverty reduction it rejects a focus on economic growth. Some of the advocacy work would fit into the realm of post-development.

The distinction between development work and advocacy poses an interesting paradox for development practitioners. On the one hand, there is a call for more aid for development work. On the other hand, there is a need for a change in the global system so that aid is no longer needed.<sup>29</sup> An agency like CEAS rejects the call for development, focusing on advocacy and conscientization<sup>30</sup> to change the structures of power, as the fourth chapter explores. In contrast, CA is still working within the context of development trying to balance the two concerns. In CA discussions, tensions emerge between the concepts of development work and advocacy as the theological reflections help to further illuminate. The final chapter considers how these tensions can be addressed and maintained.

Although this thesis focuses on CSOs, they are not the only locus for development practice. Such work is also done by Northern and Southern governments. A prominent example here in the UK is the Department for International Development (DfID),<sup>31</sup> which also provides funding for CA and with whom CA interacts in terms of developing policy positions.<sup>32</sup> CA's advocacy takes into account this wider picture. For example, the campaign makes specific suggestions for changes to UK government practice regarding international trade.

There are also international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF),<sup>33</sup> which provide grants and loans to countries for

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<sup>29</sup> See Ranis 1999 and Therien and Lloyd 2000 for further analysis of this paradox.

<sup>30</sup> See the glossary for a definition of conscientization. This term is detailed further in the fourth chapter.

<sup>31</sup> For further information on this department, see [www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk).

<sup>32</sup> One question that remains outside the focus of this thesis is the relationship between CA and DfID. Part of a future analysis could be the question of how this relationship is affected by the fact that some of the money given to CA and other organisations by governments, 'enables governments to direct aid to countries with which they might not wish to have official contacts.' (Vallely 1990, 76)

<sup>33</sup> For further information on this organisation see [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org).

development work. The World Trade Organisation (WTO)<sup>34</sup>, another focus of the CA campaign, could also be placed here. It provides a locus around which countries negotiate on issues of international trade, which may enhance development. CA argues that it does not do so currently and thus the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO are all targets in CA's campaign to change the rules of international trade.

Finally, much trade, considered to be the engine of economic growth, is now conducted between companies bypassing governments entirely. Thus, when discussing development as economic growth, companies have to become a focus. CA's campaign specifically advocates changes to regulation of companies. In the past twenty years, there has been a mushrooming of transnational corporations (TNCs),<sup>35</sup> those companies usually based in the northern countries, where the profits return, but conducting business and getting the raw materials from their subsidiaries in the southern countries. This is one of the primary characteristics of the current phenomenon of globalisation<sup>36</sup>, as considered throughout this thesis.

However, CEAS refuses to focus on international trade and companies. From their point of view, it is crucial to make their government work responsibly first, as most of the communities with which they work have no way to interact with any company, either as a consumer, an employee, or a shareholder. It is simply not relevant to their communities who do not participate in the international economy. These communities can, however, participate in the political realm as citizens. A responsive government could then be a first step in the fight against the globalisation of neoliberal capitalism<sup>37</sup>.

CA supporters in the UK regions seem to be undecided as to whether a focus on better management of economic globalisation is enough. Thus, a discussion of localisation<sup>38</sup>, as an alternative, emerges. The question of how human beings can be treated as citizens too and not solely as consumers also emerges from the theological reflection. The different strategies are detailed over these pages as the unique contribution of Christianity to the work of these agencies is discerned.

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<sup>34</sup> For further information on this organisation see [www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org).

<sup>35</sup> See the glossary for a definition of transnational corporations.

<sup>36</sup> The various definitions of globalisation are explored in the second chapter.

<sup>37</sup> See the glossary for a definition of capitalism.

<sup>38</sup> See the glossary for a definition of localisation. This term is considered further in the second chapter.

#### 4. 'Why Theology and Development'?

Romy Tiongco, head of the Northwest regional team at CA and Filipino Roman Catholic liberation theologian, poses this question at the beginning of his book *Doing Theology and Development: Meeting the Challenge of Poverty*.

'Putting theology and development together may seem an odd thing to do. Development is concerned with the immediate, practical challenge of tackling world poverty. ... Theology seems too abstract, too removed, more concerned with the hereafter than the here and now.' (White and Tiongco 1997, 1)

Yet, theology is not an abstract concept either for CA or for its partner CEAS. It does not focus on the hereafter. Instead, theology is a second step, emerging from reflection on the first step, which is the concrete practice of (post-) development. This thesis explores how this integration occurs in CA and CEAS.

##### 4.1 A definition of theology

In defining the term theology, I take from Tiongco among others the concept of 'faith seeking understanding.' As practised in this thesis, theology is 'an active commitment to live one's faith, critically and questioningly, lovingly and hopefully.' (White and Tiongco 1997, 5) Theology, then, is faith in action, as Mukarji envisaged it. Such action is never neutral. It demands that a stance be taken on all issues. This theology deals with reality and is developed from reality.

The terms 'theology' and 'faith' are used interchangeably throughout the thesis as they were in the research. In discussions with CA staff, the word theology evoked a formal understanding and a common response was to say that they were not familiar with theology, not having been trained in that area.

I find the question of what is Christian Aid's theology ... something which I don't myself have a very clear picture of ... not being a student of theology, not having ever had any formal theological input, in my life at all really, in that kind of sense. (Interview 18, 2000)

Changing the wording to that of faith or beliefs evoked a more comfortable response as people understood that wording to reflect the interaction between Christianity and their daily lives. Theology was a word they associated with a degree in theology or ministry, which would lead to a systematic or dogmatic explanation. The understanding of theology as an action, doing theology through the practice of daily life, was reflected in the discussions, but not usually associated with the word 'theology' on a formal level.

Tiongco in describing CA's approach to theology stated,

'there is no systematic theology. There is no dogmatic theology... There is a lived theology... but: 1. It is still unexplicated; uncodified; 2. It is definitely a second moment to lived praxis of faith.' (Tiongco 2002)

The first chapter reflects further on the definition of theology and on the staff interaction with the term itself.

#### 4.2 A definition of liberation theology

The understanding of theology as emerging from reflection on the practice of daily life is a key element within liberation theology. Liberation theology uses the term 'praxis' to describe action or practice. Praxis is 'any human act addressed to another human person.' (Dussel<sup>39</sup> 1988, 8) This theology argues that 'God-talk' is useless without 'God-walk.' (Althaus-Reid<sup>40</sup> 2000b, 388) Theology then is a concrete merging of action and reflection. It is this 'praxis' that suggests dogma. However, such dogma is not final. The concept of orthodoxy is replaced by orthopraxis, which is right action and reflection in a continuing spiral, each influencing the other. (388)

Central to this theology is the hermeneutic circle, detailed further in the section on methodology and in the first chapter. This circle contains an interpretation of reality in the light of the Bible/spirituality and an interpretation of the Bible/spirituality in the light of reality. Thus, theological, economic, political and cultural concepts and practices are all intertwined here, as the quote from Neto showed. For example, CEAS' theological reflection, emerging from their place among the poorest, leads to a rejection of neoliberal capitalism, an economic system, which is itself supported by a different theological location.

Several other characteristics of liberation theology emerge from the remainder of this section and throughout this thesis. Rather than being detailed at the start, they are analysed as they emerge from the work and are returned to in the final chapter. In this way, the holistic approach of a theology of liberation, encompassing both method and issues is shown.

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<sup>39</sup> Enrique Dussel is an Argentinian philosopher of liberation.

<sup>40</sup> Marcella Althaus-Reid is an Argentinian materialist theologian.

### 4.3 Liberation theology and (post-)development

Theology emerges from the practice of (post-) development. Faith is seeking an understanding of poverty. Similarly, further development policy and practice emerge from the theological reflection. 'Doing development then, like theology, involves engagement in the action-reflection cycle.' (White and Tiongco 1997, 8) Theology and development contribute to each other through the hermeneutic circle. Doing theology and development together 'means to engage in the cycle of experience, analysis, reflection and action in the context of our relationship to God, and to one another as poor and non-poor.' (11) This hermeneutic circle then centres on God, human beings and poverty. The first and fourth chapters explore this methodology in the contexts of CA and CEAS.

From this spiral of action and reflection, the emerging theology tends to be issue-based rather than systematic. The prominent image is of working toward God's kingdom, or in the language of CA, a new earth. This new earth has justice as its highest goal. This theological language, struggling toward a new earth where justice will rule, describes the process of (post-)development. God's kingdom is material as well as spiritual. It requires human action alongside God's action. It is present now but will emerge fully in the future. Finally, its central characteristic is justice. This justice centres on community where the poor are prioritised.

Four issues surface from the analysis of CA and CEAS, mirroring themes in liberation theology. Each of these is developed in the following chapters. The first is the methodology, the hermeneutic circle, used by the two agencies, detailed in the following section.

The second issue is community both as the place from which theology is done and as a theological concept in and of itself. Theology emerges from community and thus relations between humans in community at the local and global levels must be addressed theologically. This location is in contrast to one based on the individual. It is in community that the process of action and reflection occurs. Linked to this focus is the process of conscientization, which became known in Latin America initially through the work of Paulo Freire, a philosopher of education.

A third issue is the priority of the poor. Both CA and CEAS argue that Christianity demands a bias toward the poor. This option for the poor and the contingent concern for social justice are crucial themes for liberation theology. The bias comes to light differently in the two cases, however. At CEAS, and in Brazil in general, the location of Christianity is amongst the poor. The question of prioritising the poor is

assumed. Theology begins with the poor, as does (post-)development. In the UK regions, the CA discussions do not tend to be amongst the poorest. Thus, while there is agreement that the poor are prioritised, the issue is not as straightforward. CA begins with the question of who the poor are and a justification for why a bias is necessary.

The other aspect of this issue is whether the prioritisation of the poor requires a reduction in the wealth of the rich. For CEAS, it does. For CA, in contrast, policy on trade and globalisation emphasises the need for this bias toward the poor but does not emphasise reducing the wealth of the rich. These differences are highlighted through the theological reflection on the setting of limits on the economy in the Sabbath and Jubilee legislation, God's ownership of the earth, and the Eucharist as a model for reverent consumption and life in active and just community.

The final issue is a focus on sinful structures. This aspect includes an analysis of principalities and powers and the idolatry of Mammon. Both CA and CEAS are concerned with changing structures, not just individual actions. Liberation theology's focus on structures of sin counters the historical focus on individual sin in Christianity. The theological reflection leads to differing interpretations for the policies of the two organisations. CA does not integrate a theological discussion of sinful structures into its policy, arguing that the structures themselves are not problematic, it is the rules which govern them that must be changed. Theological critiques of structures, however, argue that the structures themselves are sinful, worshipping Mammon or other idols (death) instead of God (life). This practice of idolatry should end. The structures need to be redeemed.

These themes do not, however, close the discussion of (liberation) theology and (post-) development because a wider question emerges as to how far toward God's new earth Christians are to work now. The final chapter considers the tension between the present and the future. Both CA and CEAS note that human beings are citizens as well as consumers and should be treated as such in community, so as not to exclude all those who cannot consume. Thus, a balance between the economic and political realms has to be found. The praxis of the hermeneutic circle can aid consideration of this tension through its spiral of action and reflection. The current practice of theology and development can be reflected upon in light of God's new earth (and the end of development) and further action can learn from this reflection to keep moving toward the new earth.

#### 4.4 Why not a theology of development?

These themes emerge from and point toward further practice. Tiongco states that

‘doing theology and development, then, begins with the recognition that all development policies are inevitably built on a particular worldview. This may or may not include reference to God, but it will always go beyond what is simply observable to make statements about how the world is and should be. Seeing development in this holistic way means that policies need to be examined not in isolation, but in the context of the broader perspective which they reflect.’ (White and Tiongco 1997, 3)

Tiongco assumes a conversation will take place between theology/spirituality and development policy. Development is not neutral; it is based on a particular worldview. Thus, the question can be asked: ‘why is there not a discussion of a theology of development?’

In the late 1960s there was an attempt to stimulate debate over a theology *of or for* development in the North.<sup>41</sup> It stagnated, as the quotation from Elliott alluded to, while the emergence of liberation theology in Latin America with its new methodology of action and reflection, introduced a different location for the discussion. Liberation theology grew out of a context that was critical of development. In 1974, there was a series of articles on theology and development published in a *Reader in Political Theology*, edited by Alistair Kee<sup>42</sup>.

The first characteristic of these writings is an acceptance of the concept of development. It is not, however, an unquestioning acceptance. Aspects of development are questioned but the paradigm itself is not rejected. During this time, development was discussed mainly in the North while the South focused on revolution. In theological terms, the discussion in the South began with liberation from their situation of oppression. Thus, the first shift away from a theology of development is from the acceptance of the development paradigm to a critique and rejection of the paradigm.

The second characteristic of the writings on a theology of development is an assumption that theology should be able to reflect on the process of development through a monologue, rather than a dialogue. Theology could provide a motivation for the process of development, could analyse the goals of development, and could analyse the method used in development. (Löffler 1974) Theology was to consider development, perhaps lending advice. However, the practice of development was not to consider

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<sup>41</sup> For further analysis of the debates over a theology of development, see Kee 1974, 66-91.

<sup>42</sup> Alistair Kee is Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies at the University of Edinburgh.

theology. Theological themes were not to emerge from development. Instead, theological concepts such as Christology could influence development, a monologue. The second shift then is from a monologue to a dialogue, where the life experience of the poorest contributes directly to theological reflection and further praxis.

Both CA and CEAS draw on the tradition of liberation theology, rather than the initial debates over a possible theology of development. This proves a difficult mix for CA with its acceptance of development. It is possible that CA still hopes that there could be a theology of development, in the sense of a justification of what is occurring on the ground. However, while the policy team is still dealing with the concept of development, this is not evidenced by the discussions amongst the staff members involved with theological reflection. The development of the campaign on trade at CA does seem, however, to be searching for theological themes that could be relevant to its policy rather than allowing the reflection to influence further policy development. Thus, this tension continues. CEAS, in contrast, dealing with life on the ground in a changing Brazil has moved beyond discussing development, rejecting the concept entirely, whilst completely merging liberation theology and post-development practice.

The aim of this thesis, then, emerges from the question of how the practice of theology and development exist today and how it can move forward in the changing global situation. At CA and at CEAS, theology and development come together in the method of the hermeneutic circle. This thesis aims to describe this method, its implementation by CA and CEAS, and the analysis of reality and the theological reflection that emerges from the use of this method. It also points to ways forward for (liberation) theology and (post-) development from the experience of communities on the ground in the UK and in Brazil. This thesis also uses and follows the methodology of the hermeneutic circle itself, through analysis of the fieldwork, to describe this process and its outcomes, as the following section explores.

In order to describe this method, the first chapter explores how CA defines theology and what it expects from theology. It then explores the method of the hermeneutic circle and its implementation at CA through addressing series of questions. It first asks if there is reflection on the action in community at CA. It then considers whether this process is made clear to all CA staff. It further analyses whether the reflection found is critical both of the action and of the faith or spirituality. Finally, it asks whether this reflection actually influences further action. In conclusion, the place of partners in this process is detailed.

The second chapter examines how CA analyses the reality of development, one aspect of the hermeneutic circle. It begins by exploring the CA's current advocacy focus: the campaign on trade. It then analyses how CA itself inserts the trade campaign into its general policy on trade and the global economy with specific reference to a regional workshop on God and the Global Economy. CA's definitions of development and globalisation are elicited and its position on international trade is considered in this context. The final section of the chapter considers an alternative position on development and globalisation based on the questions raised by the participants in this workshop: localisation. This alternative was raised in several different contexts that resulted in a seminar within CA itself to consider how it related to the discussions around trade.

The third chapter explores the next step in the hermeneutic circle at CA, the theological reflection. It considers the context in which CA discusses development and globalisation, the new earth. It then analyses the end goal of CA's theological praxis: justice. Finally, the chapter details the elements that CA considers justice to require: the prioritisation of the community over the individual, the bias toward the poor, the need to lower the wealth of the rich, and the possible sinfulness of structures in their idolatry of Mammon and their position as principalities and powers.

The fourth chapter then moves to an analysis of how the Brazilian partner, CEAS, follows the hermeneutic circle. It begins by asking if CEAS and its associated communities implement the hermeneutic circle. It then explores how, within this circle, CEAS analyses reality and forms a particular understanding of development and globalisation. It further considers how the understanding then impacts further praxis in communities. Finally, it explores the theological issues that emerge from the process of action and reflection: the poor as the starting point for theology, sin in structures, the need for conscientization to share power, the Eucharist as a model for community, and the need for a multifaith hermeneutic circle.

The conclusion then suggests ways in which CA could take the hermeneutic circle, and the reflection which emerges from it, forward. It focuses on an analysis of the tension between the present and the future in God's new earth, which raises three further points to consider. It explores how the tension may impact the focus on consumption, the hermeneutic circle itself, and the possibility for expansion of the discussion beyond Christianity.

While this thesis focuses mainly on Christianity, the discussion over faith and (post-) development does not have to be limited to a Christian theology. At several

points, 'spirituality' is substituted for 'theology,' particularly in the work of CEAS, as the fourth chapter explores. As the debate over theology and development continues there must be contributions from other faiths and from those who do not subscribe to one particular faith. For example, on the ground in Brazil with CEAS, it is taken for granted that indigenous religions, like Candomblé<sup>43</sup>, form part of the debate and the Christian element incorporates Catholic, mainstream Protestant, and Pentecostal elements. Further discussions of theology and development could be expanded out to other faiths, other development organisations, governments, and international organisations, as CEAS shows.

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<sup>43</sup> See Agier 1998 for a discussion of Candomblé in Bahia.

## 5. Methodology

One of the tenets of liberation theology is that no action is neutral. Similarly, I come to this research from a particular background. Brought up in a poorer household in the USA, attending a conservative evangelical church, I was disheartened by the focus on the assumption that the suffering in this life was to be relieved in the afterlife through spiritual salvation. This attitude often led to acceptance of unjust situations, as something not to be challenged. At university, I focused on international development and felt that there was in this field, on the other hand, a lack of acknowledgement of the role that religion plays in influencing economic, political, and social processes both in individual motivation and in structures. Thus, I come to theology from this background. My experiences in the field of development led me to theology and in particular to liberation theology with a focus on Brazil.

The topic emerged from this background as did the methodology that I have used in the thesis. I began the thesis research with participant observation and qualitative data analysis. During the period of research, it became clear that CA and CEAS were using the method of the hermeneutic circle to integrate their faith and development. Thus, my participant observation and qualitative data analysis became part of the hermeneutic circle and this thesis itself began to follow the method of the hermeneutic circle, to reflect on the emerging issues. I have combined an ethnographic approach, familiar to social scientists, with the theological method of the hermeneutic circle, familiar to liberation theologians.

The remainder of this section will explore the three parts to the method of this thesis: participant observation, qualitative data analysis, and the hermeneutic circle.

### 5.1 Participant observation

A researcher conducts participant observation by participating and observing in a particular setting.<sup>44</sup> This method has its own unique characteristics. First, participant observation focuses on how people in a community interact with each other. The daily practice of human beings is the focus. As Burawoy notes, participant observation ‘brings together both the perspective of the participant who calls for understanding and the perspective of the observer who seeks causal explanation.’ (Burawoy et al 1991, 3) I selected CA as the main community for study because of their historical faith base and

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<sup>44</sup> For further analysis of participant observation see Jorgenson 1989.

because they were willing to be researched. I then chose CEAS, one of CA's partners, because they were considered to be related to the emerging themes within CA.

In terms of selecting the case study, there can be a 'case of' study, or an 'encased' study. A 'case of' study is when 'the case is selected as an example of some wider population or phenomenon.' (Dey 1999, 226) That type of approach can be used when the general field is understood and comparisons can be made between different cases.

Instead, this thesis presents an 'encased' study. 'This refers to the study of a particular substantive area, where the aim is not to generalize from the particular but to understand it as a unique and complex phenomenon.' (Dey 1999, 228) The aim is to understand the integration of faith and development practice at CA and CEAS. It may then lead to more general considerations. 'The 'encased' study may go a long way toward explaining the particular phenomenon and understanding its implications.' (228) CA and CEAS are 'encased' studies because they can show how faith and (post-) development practice merge through the action reflection process but these studies cannot be taken as representative of all faith-based agencies.

Second, participant observation aims to understand and explain particular concepts important to the community, from their own perspective. In the case of this thesis, the main concept to be understood was this integration of faith and development practice. Thus, the research began with the very general question: are faith and development being integrated in the practice of CA and CEAS, and if so, how. I was able to see how people were acting and reflecting on theology and development at CA and CEAS. I was also able to see how they understood their action and reflection.

Because participant observation focuses on the practice of the community in this present point in time, the end result of the research cannot be known at the beginning. The research is open-ended. Even the problem itself is defined during the period of research. Thus, in the case of this thesis, it emerged that the method being used by CA and CEAS to integrate theology and development was that of the hermeneutic circle and within this method, specific themes for theological reflection were being considered.

In this participant observation, I as the researcher became deeply involved in the case study, generating reams of qualitative data. I was not immersed in either community but I was in dialogue with both communities. Participant observation rejects the possibility of remaining completely neutral and of being completely objective, a concept also rejected by the hermeneutic circle. By participating, complete objectivity is lost. The research is validated through the gaining of access to the community by the

researcher and through the explanation of concepts central to that community that can be backed up by the fieldwork.<sup>45</sup> Such has been the case with CA and CEAS.

The participant observer can be a participant who also observes or an observer who also participates. The role of the researcher may also change over time in a particular community. The 'participant role can be conceptualised on a continuum from a complete outsider to a complete insider.' (Jorgenson 1989, 55) Although I was a complete outsider with no real role to play as a participant, except in some community meetings, the staff members at CEAS were completely open with me. And although I was a complete insider at CA, doing much of my observing and researching on the side, it was much harder to access the controversial information.

Finally, in order to generate the deep level of qualitative data necessary for analysis, it is important for the participant observer to create and maintain good relationships with the community. Developing these relationships was a simpler process at CEAS than at CA. Initially, staff at CA welcomed me warmly; I became a participant through my volunteer position in the organisation. However, my volunteering lacked any interaction with theology for the first couple of months. This included a reluctance of people to discuss the subject beyond mentioning that it was necessary. It was only after untangling all the reasons for the lack of progress, that I was finally able to forge relationships with staff members. Being a participant, and not just an observer, was important for my research as they were reluctant to open up to a complete outsider. I did not, however, contribute directly to the theological reflection, in order to remain true to observing the process.

CEAS, on the other hand, seemed reluctant to have me participate at first. It took me nearly three weeks of phone calls, meetings and emails upon my arrival in the city before I finally received permission to attend the meetings and participate in their work in the communities. However, they then opened every aspect of the organisation to me and answered all of my questions. In fact, I was offered access to far more than I was able to use in this thesis.

This difference could be due in part to the methods of decision-making in both organisations. Whereas the head of the relevant department at CA did not need approval from every team member for my participation and research, the decisions at CEAS are made through the consensus of all staff members. This has also resulted in a difference in terms of my means of reporting data from CA and CEAS. At CEAS, every staff

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<sup>45</sup> Validity, neutrality, and objectivity have been debated for decades in participant observation. See Jorgenson 1989 for further discussion of these topics.

member was willing for me to refer to them by name, no anonymity was required. At CA, in contrast, I had many conversations, which I was either asked not to write about at all or asked use without any names or positions attached.

The most important aspect for the success of the participant observation was to make sure I was being of value to the organisations in exchange for them opening up. In the case of CEAS, I reviewed their latest application for funding from CA. At CA, I took on responsibility for keeping notes for many of the meetings I participated in and produced short papers and a bibliography during the period of research.

## 5.2 Qualitative data analysis

Participant observation is recorded by fieldnotes. (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw 1995) These notes are a diary of events, descriptions of the place, time, date, and all the informal conversations recalled. The excerpts above are an edited version of parts of the fieldnotes. During the day I recorded as much detail as possible in a notebook and transcribed and expanded these notes into a Word document in the evenings. On a weekly basis, the texts were put into a qualitative data analysis program, QSR Nud\*ist, in order to analyse and generate the themes.

This qualitative data analysis formed the basis for my contribution to the hermeneutic circle at CA and CEAS, enabling me to analyse their reality and their reflection on faith. In this analysis, I read through all of my notes line by line, assigning codes or themes to each line, reviewing the older data in the light of newer data and vice versa. That week's themes were compared to those of the previous week and so on, until no new themes were emerging and the period of fieldwork could end.

At the beginning of the qualitative data analysis there is a period of open coding, which means creating a word or two words to describe or categorise each line of data.<sup>46</sup> The categories are not pre-established but rather are created to describe what is occurring as the analysis progresses. During this part of the process, short notes are written alongside the codes, describing them further or suggesting how they may be related to other emerging codes. As the coding progressed, more and more data coalesced around particular themes. The main theme became the hermeneutic circle and within that, the main foci of their action and reflection: development and globalisation through consideration of the new earth and then with regard to the new earth, justice and what justice requires.

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<sup>46</sup> For further information on the various coding techniques see Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 1995, Chapter Six: Processing Fieldnotes: Coding and Memoing.

When there is a coming together of particular codes and themes, another process of coding begins. The researcher returns to the data to find further aspects within these particular codes. This part of the process can be called axial or focused coding. The notes which have linked together the various codes become more detailed and start to create a structure for the thesis. In this thesis, the structure became that of the hermeneutic circle, described later in this section. Within each step of the hermeneutic circle, particular sub-themes were generated, which form the sub-sections of the chapters.

When the structure was found, I then returned to the fieldnotes for a third time to find those that most accurately represented the entire emerging picture. From this process, a regional workshop entitled God and the Global Economy emerged as the best example of the hermeneutic circle and its associated themes. Thus, the second and third chapters are loosely based around this workshop with supporting excerpts from fieldnotes in other situations to round out the picture.

### 5.3 The hermeneutic circle

The analysis then moved into the hermeneutic circle for the writing up process. In this process, the thesis blended the social science method with the theological method of the hermeneutic circle. In the social sciences, participant observation and qualitative data analysis would lead to an ethnographic style of writing. 'Ethnography is a method of studying and learning about a person or group of people... the ethnographer attempts to get a detailed understanding of the circumstances of the few subjects being studied.' (Ethnography) While beginning from this basis, this thesis moved toward further theological reflection in the case of the hermeneutic circle.

As the method of the hermeneutic circle was itself central to CA and CEAS, I followed it in the writing of the thesis in order to remain faithful to the community's representation. This thesis first describes the method and then analyses and interprets the practice to encourage the hermeneutic circle to continue moving forward. The first chapter will explore the particular characteristics of this method in the case of CA, while the fourth chapter shows the method in progress at CEAS.

In the hermeneutic circle, theology emerges from the life of the community. The first step in this circle, or spiral, is the reading of reality from the experience of the community. Thus, one's situation has to be examined critically. In this thesis, the second chapter follows this step in the hermeneutic circle, examining the reality of CA: development, and in particular, the trade campaign.

The next step is called the dialectic of scripture and reality, which could be rewritten as spirituality and reality. (Althaus-Reid 2000b, 389) The reality discerned is the starting-point for engaging with spirituality. In the reading of the Bible, the texts would be read from the perspective of the community situation. The theological reflection comes from the situations in which the UK and overseas partners and CA staff members work, as the third chapter analyses.

The third step is understanding this scripture, theological concept or spirituality as a community from the reflection on reality. (Althaus-Reid 2000b, 389) The analysis is done as a group, not by one theologian and presented to the group. There is a continual intertwining of this reading of reality and of spirituality/scripture, which leads to the next step. The third chapter suggests ways forward to take this further step and shows how CA is beginning this reflection in community and with some reference to academic theologians external to CA.

In the final step of the hermeneutic circle, there has to be an 'appropriation of the text' or spirituality or theological concept. (Althaus-Reid 2000b, 389) Reading reality and the spirituality together leads to a change in action, based on that reading. This is praxis. It is from this praxis that orthopraxis (dogma) could come. Yet there should not be a systematisation of the results, as is often assumed with dogma, because the process is continual. The praxis and orthopraxis continue to grow and change as reality changes. The fourth chapter shows this process in CEAS. In the case of CA, there is a lack of full appropriation of the reflection into further action. The conclusion suggests potential ways forward that can be further enriched by the participation of other CA partners.

In order to remain faithful to the hermeneutic circle, care is taken to only introduce academic theologians who have been referred to by CA or CEAS themselves. The themes covered in this thesis emerge first from the fieldwork, from the hermeneutic circle, and are then elaborated upon with reference to theologians and practitioners familiar to CA and CEAS. This method is similar to that in the social sciences. In participant observation, the analysis is also checked with regard not only to interviews and other conversations but also with regard to other documentation from both agencies.

For example, many of the themes raised by CA echo themes in liberation theology. Some liberation theologians were directly referred to by CA and by CEAS, while other works appear in CA's library, have been referenced in CA discussion papers, and in conversations with CA staff members. Themes are taken forward with reference to these thinkers to encourage CA and CEAS to consider how to continue integrating theology and development in the hermeneutic circle. Because the hermeneutic circle is

only partially implemented at CA, paradoxical themes emerge. These lead to the tensions discussed in the conclusion that need to be balanced in order to move forward.

There are two characteristics central to the method of the hermeneutic circle. First, reading reality and the Bible alongside each other presupposes that the past, the Bible, can be related to the present, reality. This concept is known as the unity of history.<sup>47</sup> The Bible and its message do not stand outside of history; they are part of history. It is in the reality of history that people have a relationship with God and with others. As detailed in later chapters, this unity means that humans relate to God through relating to others. At the same time, when liberation theologians discuss working toward God's kingdom, they mean literally working in this world toward God's kingdom. The kingdom is not solely a spiritual concept. Methodologically this is crucial because, in this case, 'any and all liberating experiences- whether they appear sacred or secular- represent God's kingdom.' (Smith 1991, 41) CA staff members also understand the integration of theology with practice in this way.

Second, crucial to this hermeneutic circle is that it is a 'hermeneutic of suspicion.' One does not examine theology to match it to policy that is already decided. Similarly, one does not choose policy simply because of a theological precondition. Rather the two are fully integrated and each can speak to the other. This means that there has to be a suspicion of reality and a suspicion of the assumed interpretation of the scripture or spirituality. 'If theology somehow assumes that it can respond to the new questions without changing its customary interpretation of the Scriptures, that immediately terminates the hermeneutic circle.' (Segundo 1977, 9) The same is true of the reality being examined. One has to approach the circle with an open mind, willing for opinions to be shifted. This aspect is one of the challenges that staff members face in CA and in the churches.

I became part of the hermeneutic circles at CA and CEAS as a participant observer. I participated in their reading of reality. I then participated and observed while they set the reality and the spiritual reflection alongside each other and while they began to reflect on these concepts together in community. The thesis itself reflects the themes that emerged from this participation. It concludes by exploring ways forward for further engagement in the hermeneutic circle.

Participant observation, qualitative data analysis and the hermeneutic circle have some similarities, which makes their merging an easier process. First, in both cases the

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<sup>47</sup> For further analysis of this concept see 'The Unity of History' in Smith 1991, 39-43.

central concepts of the research are defined according to what they mean to people in the specific communities. Thus, the definition of development varies according to CA and to CEAS, as do the definitions of globalisation. One of the central objectives of participant observation is to see what things mean to the community and a central feature of the hermeneutic circle is for the analysis of reality and faith to occur within the community itself.

Second, in both methods, the emerging story is only justified if it continues to be generated from the method. The analysis, with its generation of codes, has to be constantly rechecked in the light of new data. In the hermeneutic circle the result is orthopraxis. Dogma has to come from right action, not just right reflection, and may change subject to further action and reflection.

Similarly, both participant observation and the hermeneutic circle have their limitations. Both methods locate the research in the present practice of a community. Thus, this thesis can be taken as a comment on this moment in time, the research period between November 1992 and November 2002. Further action and reflection by the communities will change the situation. In fact, changes have already taken place, some of which I mention briefly in footnotes.

The second limitation is that the theological reflection explored here through the hermeneutic circle is not a systematic theology, created by formally trained theologians. It is an issue-based theology, informally emerging from the communities. The theology comes from community to be used by the community. It can be enhanced with reference to academic theologians, where CA and CEAS themselves refer to the theologians, but only to the extent that it enriches the community action and reflection. This is why I have used an ethnographic perspective to try to be faithful to the community's understanding of the integration of faith and action.

Thus, the thesis research moved through participant observation and qualitative data analysis to the hermeneutic circle. The writing up focuses on this theological method and points to ways forward for continuing the hermeneutic circle. I illuminated the process of the hermeneutic circle in CA and in CEAS in order to contribute to further research on faith and development. I facilitated, reflected on and researched the current situation in order to urge the hermeneutic circle forward. The final conclusion then returned to the question of integrating faith and development, pointing to current tensions in the method that need to be resolved in order for the method to continue to be effective.

The qualitative data analysis and the hermeneutic circle are parts of a whole. The analysis was the breaking down of the hermeneutic circle into its various parts and concepts. The writing up then reformulated these aspects into a whole thesis. The analysis and its reformulation remain dialectic in that the thesis can always be compared to previous and future analysis to form and reform the hermeneutic circle. This thesis can continue to be used by academic development theorists, academic theologians, development practitioners and faith practitioners as the process is ongoing. It began during the fieldwork and can continue to further thinking and new ideas within and outwith the hermeneutic circle.

There are two ends of these methods of research that are important to this thesis. First they provide practical applications. 'Prediction and explanation should be able to give the practitioner understanding and some control over situations.' (Dey 1999, 232) In this way, CA and CEAS can provide models of how it is possible for other organisations to integrate theology and (post-) development in practice and to understand how such integration occurs.

Further, the methods themselves can also be used as a guide to 'provide a style for research on particular areas of behaviour.' (Dey 1999, 232) This is a particularly crucial result for two reasons. The thesis can show how to examine the links between theology and development as a researcher. And it can show how the emerging theological and developmental concepts and processes can be analysed to continue the hermeneutic circle itself.

## Chapter One: Action and Reflection in Community at Christian Aid: What Is Theology and How Does It Emerge from Practice?

### Abstract

This chapter outlines the method of doing theology at CA to set the scene for the emerging theological concepts. The methodology stemming from liberation theology is the hermeneutic circle. The prominent understanding of theology in CA is that of faith-based praxis. Theology is created by Christians as they act out their beliefs in everyday life. At CA, this action occurs in the field of development. The reflection on the action occurs in community. In CA's case these communities are regional workshops, working groups, conferences and other meetings. In a true process of action and reflection, the critical reflection on the Bible or spirituality alongside the development practice should influence further action. It is at this point that the method seems to be only partially implemented as the action and reflection is limited to those CA communities dealing with the UK churches.

To understand this method and its application eight questions are posed. The first section entitled CA's Understanding of Theology addresses three of these questions.

1. How does CA define theology?
2. What does CA mean when it calls itself church-owned?
3. What does CA expect from theology?

The second section entitled The Hermeneutic Circle then addresses the five remaining questions.

4. In this action reflection process, is there reflection on the action in community?
5. Is this process made clear to all CA staff?
6. Is the reflection critical both of the action and of the faith or spirituality?
7. Does the reflection influence further action?
8. How are CA's overseas partners involved in this method?

### An introduction to the setting

This chapter explores five places in CA where the process of action and reflection was found. A sixth location, a regional day-long workshop on God and the Global Economy, forms the basis for the second and third chapters. The first location was a CA C&C department conference, which focused on the new CA campaign on

trade.<sup>1</sup> The second was the Churches team in London and the third was the Scottish team, both part of the C & C department. The fourth location was the cross-organisational TWG in London and the fifth was in the Theology Lunchtime Discussion Group (TLDG) also in London.

The C&C department conference, entitled Trade for Life: Theology and the New Campaign was held in September, 2000. The Churches team and the UK regional teams all participated, about 150 people. It was held over three days in a conference centre near Derby. There was a dining room where we all shared our meals and a small pub, which filled in the evenings and spilled out onto the grassy area outside. The participants were divided up into small groups of ten. Throughout the conference, these small groups met after plenary sessions to have time to discuss and reflect on the issues raised in more detail. While these groups were randomly assigned, there was also time for each regional team to meet up on the final day to reflect on how the conference would affect their own work.

There were a range of staff members and volunteers present. For example, my small group was made up of the head of one of the regional teams, three CA staff members, and one staff member from another aid agency. The remaining five of us were volunteers. There was a church minister and local committee members. There was also one overseas partner representative present: Bishop George Ninan from the Church of North India.

The excerpts in this chapter focus on a workshop, held on the second day of this conference, entitled Theology and Campaigning. Nearly fifty people, one third of those attending the conference, participated in the workshop, although there were seven different options during this time period. Mukarji, the director, also participated in this workshop. It was led by Rebecca Dudley<sup>2</sup>, the former Adult Christian Education Adviser for the Churches team. She is also a minister in the United Reformed Church. The participants here were also a mixture of CA staff members and volunteers, including some clergy. Dudley was able to let the audience do the talking for most of the session, although there were so many people in attendance. She asked questions, broke us down into small groups to respond, and turned questions back to the participants when they were asked of her. Her goal for the session was to get people to start talking and

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<sup>1</sup> The tenets of this campaign are detailed in the following chapter. CA is arguing for fairer rules in international trade and regulation of TNCs.

<sup>2</sup> Dudley has now also left the organisation. Her Job Share, Peter Graystone, has taken over the full-time position.

reflecting on theological issues, which she hoped would continue after the conference. In addition, she gathered up the responses raised in the group in order to produce two papers that were later passed around CA on the theological reflection.

More generally within the organisation, questions about theology are referred to staff members in the C&C department, particularly to the Churches team. This department:

‘helps CA to attract, inspire, resource and serve churches, communities and individuals to become part of a world wide movement that strives for justice and the ending of poverty; empowering them to pray, act and give in the interests of the poor. It facilitates CA's listening to churches and developing a sense of partnership where they can be supported to put faith into action.’ (Christian Aid 2000b)

The department head is based in London, along with the Churches team. However, the remainder of this department is dispersed throughout the UK, as it is made up of the regional teams. My areas of focus within this department were the Churches team and the Scottish team.

The Churches team has the same purpose as the department as a whole. However, it specifically targets ‘sponsoring churches, church congregations, churchgoers and other people of faith.’ (Churches Team One-Year Plan 2000-2001 [2000]) This team was led by two different people during my time with CA. There were six further staff members located in the London office, including two Adult Christian Education advisers, a Churches Liaison adviser and Denominational Appeals advisers. The team was in flux throughout my time with CA, with several staff members leaving, being replaced and new positions being created. Some of the job titles also changed. However, the team’s purpose remained the same and it remained the locus for much of the theological reflection.

The Scottish team has historically focused on the eleven sponsoring churches in Scotland. Its make-up is further explored in section 1.2 to answer the question of how the churches exercise their ownership of CA. The SCAC is central to the Scottish team’s work and is made up of two representatives from each of these churches, as well as three CA board members. Its mandate is ‘the oversight of CA’s work in Scotland.’ (The Scottish Christian Aid Committee Mission Statement) Specifically, ‘it is a channel of communication between CA and its sponsoring churches.’ SCAC members report back from meetings to their denominational boards.

As part of the research, 29 interviews were conducted with Scottish staff and SCAC members and these contribute to the analysis. Nine men and 20 women were interviewed. They divided themselves into three types of CA association, with some mentioning more than one: SCAC (17), staff (12), and church related (7). Their length of association with CA ranged from less than one year (3), one to five years (4), five to 15 years (12), to over 15 years (10).

The TWG was set up in 2000 to respond to questions about theology from across the organisation, although the idea of such a group had been discussed for over a year beforehand. It was set up by the Church & Community department, although there is one person from each team in CA responsible for reading the meeting notes and agenda. These staff members attend when there is a particular issue relevant to their team. The make-up of this group is further detailed throughout this chapter.

The TLDG was also created by the Churches team in response to issues emerging from the regional staff conference and the TWG. It was intended to give the organisation an informal forum for theological discussion. Dudley organised the first session but responsibility was passed on to other staff members in later meetings. The first meeting had over 20 staff members in attendance. About half of the participants were from the Church & Community department, with the remainder from the International Department. The discussions were lively and wide-ranging, as later sections explore.

# 1. CA's Understanding of Theology

## 1.1 How does CA define theology?

'Theology's not my strong point, I would have to say, but I've always appreciated Christian Aid because it is my type of Christianity and if I think well, why am I working for Christian Aid rather than Oxfam, it's because I can feel that... this meets what I think is important in my faith.' (Interview 22, 2000)

'There is no systematic theology. There is no dogmatic theology... There is a lived theology... but: 1. It is still unexplicated; uncodified; 2. It is definitely a second moment to lived praxis of faith.' (Tiongco 2002)

The discussion of theology or faith is seen to be a crucial element within CA. In the interviews, twelve people said directly that theology was vital to the work that CA does with several others mentioning that it was part of CA's work. 'It's there in the words of Jesus and the example of Jesus and a very good leaflet by Christian Aid leaves you in no doubt that it's there.' (Interview 10, 2000) For this person, theology emerges from CA formally through the use of Bible stories and verses to explore different issues. CA literature cites Bible verses throughout. For example, the annual report quotes I Cor. 12:26: 'if one member (of the body) suffers, we all suffer together with it...' (Christian Aid 2001a, 34) It offers no further explanation, assuming that the reader will make their own connections. So how do these scriptures show CA's faith or theology?

The introduction defined theology as 'an active commitment to live one's faith.' (White and Tiongco 1997, 5) CA's director too has described theology as putting faith into action, a mixture of 'life into faith' and 'faith into life.' Is this CA's definition of theology? Do the Bible verses used reflect the commitment to an active faith? In setting up the TWG and in later meetings, the participants addressed these questions. They sought to explain to the organisation the purpose for this group. Tiongco suggested that the group could be a forum for discussion of theological issues, working out what the dominant thinking within the organisation was. The purpose would be:

'1. to identify and develop theology that informs CA's work, policy, education, campaigning, and fundraising and 2. to encourage and resource CA staff and supporters to develop their theologies.' (Cooper 2001)

Thus, the group would draw together the threads of the reflection occurring throughout the organisation.

CA's theology is not an official dogma that can be presented from the top of the organisation to the remainder of the staff. Instead, the theology emerges from the staff members themselves and can be collected by others to ensure that everyone is informed. The definition of theology then is reinforced as 'faith seeking understanding.' The work can inform theology just as theology can inform the work. It is the process of Christians living their daily lives that produces theology.

The Scottish team too understood theology to be faith-based action. Several of the people interviewed used practical actions to describe theology: 'live simply that others may simply live' (Interview 11, 2000); 'the church in action with the world's poor' (Interview 10, 2000); and 'the Christian gospel in action.' (Interview 2, 1999) They used what they saw happening in CA to describe theology. It is 'about being involved, getting alongside people, caring, challenging, you know, like the Old Testament prophets and Jesus as well.' (Interview 22, 2000) CA's theology is active.

These statements are reinforced throughout the chapter by the examples of practice.

## 1.2 What does CA mean when it calls itself church-owned?

'I'm sure that most churches still think ...they've chosen Christian Aid over Oxfam or Save the Children or whatever. I think it's quite hard to get over to them that actually well, you know, we're part of your church. Your church set us up... to do the job we're doing. And I think... the basic people in churches don't realise that at all.' (Interview 13, 2000)

Staff members in the C&C department consistently relate the discussion of theology to the UK churches. So too does CA's director. In opening the C&C department conference, he said:

'CA is able to say what it means to be a Christian and what it means to be the church... CA is the mission, ministry, and witness of the church.'

CA is an outlet through which Christians, including the churches, can act. What does the fact that the churches own CA mean in practice?

This section details the formal structures of communication between CA and the Scottish churches, as an example of how church-ownership of CA works in practice. Working outward from London, there is the C&C department, which is the formal link between CA and the sponsoring churches. During the induction workshop for new staff

members the head of the C&C department explained that the goal of the department is to show the links between CA's work and the gospel. The Churches team, part of this department, is the direct link between the main office of CA in London and the UK churches. The role of the team is to inform the churches, encouraging them to support CA. CA policy contains theology; this theology should be presented to the churches for them to reflect upon. It is the responsibility of the Adult Christian Education Advisers to provide practical theology for the churches through Bible study and other materials.

The Scottish team tends to be critical of how CA is linking to the churches, arguing that the lines of communication are not always clear or effective. There are three Scottish offices located in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Perth. The National Secretary is the head of the team and there are four Area Co-ordinators, each of whom co-ordinates CA work in his/her geographical area, a generalist position. There are also several specialist positions including a Development Education Adviser, Press Officer, Youth Co-ordinator, Christian Aid Teachers' Co-ordinator, and Denominational Appeals Officer.

Volunteers are crucial to the work of the Scottish team with the churches, particularly through the SCAC and local CA committees. Individual congregations may have a CA representative on a local committee headed by a local organiser. These committees are ecumenical and consist of all churches that support CA in a particular area. The numbers on these committees can range from only two to 20+ people. The geographical nature of these local committees, of which there are over 500 in Scotland, makes it extremely difficult to have a direct link to the denominationally-organised SCAC. The Area Co-ordinators disseminate information to these committees<sup>3</sup> and they also link directly to some church leaders. At the same time, members of SCAC have the responsibility to report back from their meetings to the denominational boards, which should disseminate the information down to the individual church level. However, this system only works effectively in churches with a hierarchical structure.

Thus, there are three different lines of communication between CA and the churches: one from the Churches team in London and two in Scotland from SCAC and the local committees. Most of the staff members and volunteers referred to the relationship between CA and the churches in terms of ownership. Forty UK denominations created CA, although it is now formally separate from them.

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<sup>3</sup> There are at least 125 of these committees per area co-ordinator.

These lines of communication, however, are always said to need improvement. In particular, those interviewed stressed that the churches need to understand that they own CA. CA is their agency.

‘It became obvious that some of the leadership of one of the major denominations in Scotland didn’t seem to have taken aboard that they are one of the sponsoring churches of Christian Aid. It’s the business of... openly sponsoring a Tear Fund (another relief and development organisation) initiative and I don’t know whether that indicates that there isn’t sufficient awareness within the churches of the special relationship between the Churches and Christian Aid.’ (Interview 26, 2000)

Many of the sponsoring churches seem to have forgotten that they created CA.

The method of CA’s communication to the churches has weaknesses both on a geographical and denominational level. In particular, there is little communication between the local committees and CA. ‘I was interested in was how little contact and how little the local committees actually knew about what goes on. I mean most of them don’t know anybody here (in the Scottish team).’ (Interview 3, 1999) At the same time the lack of communication between SCAC and the local committees is also criticised because the local committees are the closest to the churches on the ground in Scotland. ‘I got the impression from that there’s a big confusion between the respective roles of the Scottish committee and the local committee. You know, I know nothing at all about local committees.’ (Interview 14, 2000)

This weakness is evidence that there is not clear communication of either theological or general issues between CA and the Scottish churches in either direction. Further, although there is agreement that improvements are needed, the question is not often examined from this perspective. Does church-ownership of CA simply mean that the churches need to support CA as their charity of choice? Or is there something more to CA being a faith-based organisation? Answering this question could help to clarify the method of the theological process in CA. Many staff members argue that the churches are and should continue to be part of the process of merging theology and development at CA through their participation in the process of action and reflection, as the remainder of this chapter explores.

### 1.3 What does CA expect from theology?

‘All of CA staff are co-workers with God in the process of upholding kingdom values.’ (Mukarji’s opening address to the C&C department conference, September 11, 2000)

In opening the C&C department conference, CA's director said that there was a need to undergird the trade campaign with theological reflection, to make sure that it was not an add-on because CA is a faith-based NGO. The very basis of CA's mandate is faith. Because Mukarji understands theology to be stemming from faith-based action, theological reflection is at the core of the campaign already and it simply needs to be made explicit.

Part of that action is the advocacy work, as he emphasised in his closing address to the same conference, which stems from the faith. CA has a 'moral power,' which emphasises that it is about being just and not 'just right or righteous.' CA's actions are economic, political, and moral. The trade campaign is one step in CA's faith-based action. Because 'every human being is a child of God and is made in God's image,' then 'the vision of this new heaven and new earth must inspire us... to take the vision of 'Change the Rules'<sup>4</sup> forward into 'Trade for Life.'" The beliefs of CA staff members and supporters influence the action. It is the Christian vision of humanity that underlies CA action.

The campaign not only stems from Christian motivation but it also challenges Christians.

'We are not just changing the world but we are changing ourselves... we are changing who we are as Christians.'

The director's expectation is that there is faith underlying the action. This faith also challenges that action. However, for him, faith-based action will automatically produce theology and theological reflection without the need for formalisation of the process.

Similar expectations of the process of theology in CA come from those outside the organisation. Clare Melamed, the Senior Policy Officer on Trade and Globalisation, related a comment that Clare Short had made. Short said that CA's role was to look at the values of justice and love that drive the campaign on trade. She assumed that policy was underpinned by faith. This assumption can only be said to be true if there is a process in place that allows theological reflection on the policy.

Do these expectations reflect those of the rest of the organisation? In fact, they do, although some staff members see the two elements as requiring more work than the director does. These expectations are clearly shown through a game played in the theology and campaigning workshop at the C&C department conference. Dudley, who was leading the session, unrolled a long sheet of paper down the length of the room on

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<sup>4</sup> This was the title of a previous CA campaign, which focused on Fairly Traded goods.

the floor.<sup>5</sup> The paper was divided into five sections, which listed the options for why CA should have theology in its new campaign:

‘1. We’re a Church organisation; so it’s got to be there. 2. Church people expect some Christian words; otherwise they won’t list (sic) to us. 3. Christian faith is one of my main reasons for being involved in this anyway. 4. Christian faith offers an independent standpoint about these issues. 5. Being involved in this campaign raises faith issues I need to look at.’  
(Dudley 2000c, 1)

The same questions can be asked of CA’s relationship to theology in general. Is it that since CA is church-owned it has to reflect a Christian orientation? Does the language have to be theological in order for the churches to pay attention? Is there is a Christian motivation for supporting CA? Does Christianity have a unique perspective to offer? Or finally, is it that involvement with CA brings up theological issues that need to be addressed?

The first step in the game was to stand on the section where CA currently is, what CA’s theology currently accomplishes. The vast majority of the group chose the third option that faith is one of the main reasons for being involved with campaigning. The people in the churches proclaim their Christianity to the world through their active support of CA. ‘Our motivation is to serve Christ, to serve God and our fellow people.’ (Interview 2, 2000) However, this motivation is not the only expectation.

The second step was to move to where the participants wanted CA to be located, what they wanted CA’s theology to accomplish.<sup>6</sup> Here, the majority of the group moved to the final option. They wanted involvement in CA and in the campaign in particular to challenge people’s faith but they were not convinced that CA achieves this element. The method used to meet this expectation is addressed in the following section. Such responses by the workshop participants fed into two papers that Dudley produced, which are used throughout this thesis as part of the theological reflection.

In order for CA and the campaign in particular to challenge people’s faith, theological concepts have to be evident to the supporters. For some of the staff members and volunteers there is confusion over what the formal avenues for theological discussion are within CA.

‘There’s not really a forum for theology. I mean, we used to have a theological adviser... I know there’s certainly a lot of

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<sup>5</sup> The questions and answers for this game come from a handout by Peter Selby, Bishop of Worcester.

<sup>6</sup> At this point, a few people refused to participate because they either did not like the way the question was posed or the suggested answers.

concern in London that theology has become downgraded. You know, there's nobody at directorate level that's got theological clout.' (Interview 17, 2000)

They know theology is there but do not think it is being made clear to all staff members and supporters. The same comments were made regarding the communication between CA and the churches in Scotland.

Staff members and volunteers also expect CA itself to be an example of the theology. CA has a Christian identity, which should be exemplified by its being a just structure, honest, and not driven by the market.<sup>7</sup> Being a just structure includes just fundraising. 'I think it used to be that Christian Aid was bright and shining and only kept tuppence for itself. There is a reason for that and I believe that it is justified.' (Interview 10, 2000) Banking practices, recycling and wastage of materials were other examples given.

Advocating just structures but not necessarily being a just structure then introduced the question of honesty. This included being honest about whether the focus of the organisation was on advocacy or fundraising. 'I feel there's almost a dishonesty there... that they're publicly stating one thing but on the other side, it's money, money, money.' (Interview 27, 2000) Another element arising, reflecting the question of honesty and of being just, is whether CA is driven by market forces or by its own ethics.

'We believe it's what the gospel tells us to do. Then it doesn't matter to me if our market share was much smaller and if we were the smallest of the big aid agencies, in a sense if we were doing what our faith said we should be doing, then I think that's sufficient.' (Interview 6, 2000)

CA should be more concerned about its policies reflecting its faith-base than about increasing its market share.

While CA has to be an example of a Christian organisation, this Christian identity does not extend to proselytism. The director stated that although CA is Christian this does not mean that its goal is to make people Christian or to help only Christians. Staff members and supporters agree. 'The type of Christianity that I don't feel comfortable with is, now have you been saved brother? And ... all we need is to be sure that we go, we're going to heaven after we die.' (Interview 22, 2000) CA's mission is not to convert people to Christianity.

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<sup>7</sup> All of these focus on CA's understanding of money and the market economy, concepts addressed theologically in the following chapters.

At the same time, they acknowledged that this lack of evangelism can cause problems with the more evangelical churches. 'Well, the people who support Tear Craft and more fundamentalists don't think that Christian Aid has a particularly Christian basis.' (Interview 10, 2000). However, this does not mean that CA's work cannot attract people to Christianity. The two elements of mission and development can be complementary.

'Why doesn't Christian Aid convert souls as it were? ... The job of the church is to do that. Christian Aid is only part... of that process. It can't actually do it itself but what it does do is by supporting the development work they (churches overseas) do, they're allowing them to be the church in that place and that I think is quite important.' (Interview 1, 1999)

In fact, CA was initially set up to be complementary to, but separate from, the mission arm of the UK churches.

One of the reasons for the lack of proselytism is that CA works with any partners overseas doing what they consider to be good development work, regardless of their faith. 'Christian Aid is something that I do because I am a Christian but I don't only want to do that for the benefit of Christians and I don't want to only do that for the benefit of Christianity in terms of here's your money and your Bible.' (Interview 7, 2000) Thus, there is a Christian motivation but that motivation is not limited to working with other Christians.

The final element used to describe CA as a Christian organisation was its ecumenism. Both here in the UK and overseas CA does not link to one particular denomination. 'Christian Aid's been a great thing in my own personal ministry in an ecumenical way because the local Baptists and the local Catholics and even just to a small extent the local evangelical church have all joined in.' (Interview 9, 2000) CA challenges all churches on particular issues. Its theology is issue-based rather than systematic or dogmatic and encourages dialogue.

## 2. The Hermeneutic Circle

For CA, theology emerges from faith-based action, praxis. The method of doing theology is to act and to reflect on that action. This stems from liberation theology, and in particular, the hermeneutic circle. 'Theology does not have the first word. Theology is the second word.' (Oliveros 1996, 12) The first word is praxis. This is not to say that theology and praxis are separated. 'Theory' and 'praxis' can be separated only for pedagogical and methodological purposes, ... in reality they are two dialectical moments in one and the same dynamic, all-encompassing process.' (Vidales 1980, 38) However, to analyse the extent to which the hermeneutic circle is implemented at CA and CEAS, the various aspects within that circle are considered separately.

The hermeneutic circle has four parts that were detailed in the introduction:

1. 'reading reality from the community's experience;'
2. 'the dialectic scripture/realidad;'
3. 'understanding the text in community;'
- and
4. 'appropriation of the text.' (Althaus-Reid 2000, 388-9)

The Boffs similarly separate out three aspects of the circle, set in a dialectic: the socio-analytical, hermeneutical, and practical. Within the dialectic, the socio-analytical aspect 'operates in the sphere of the world of the oppressed. It tries to find out why the oppressed are oppressed.' (Boff & Boff 1987, 24) This analysis of reality is set alongside the hermeneutical aspect. This aspect 'operates in the sphere of God's world. It tries to discern what God's plan is for the poor.' (24) Once reality has been analysed in the light of faith and vice versa, there is then a need for action. The last aspect then 'tries to discover the courses of action that need to be followed so as to overcome oppression in accordance with God's plan.' (24) Reflection has to lead to action.

The first step in the hermeneutic circle then is the reading of reality from the experience of the community. Althaus-Reid uses the Spanish word *realidad* to describe the analysis of reality because it includes 'not only a reflection upon the actual circumstances in which we are living but also an analysis of the historical causes of those circumstances.' (Althaus-Reid 2000, 388) Within this analysis is a process of self-realisation on the part of the community, called 'conscientization'. The central focus of this analysis in the case of CA is development and the poverty that accompanies it. It 'has to begin by informing itself about the actual conditions in which the oppressed live, the various forms of oppression they may suffer.' (Boff & Boff 1987, 24) CA and its partners together reflect on this global situation, as the second chapter explores through the example of the trade campaign.

The next aspect of the hermeneutic circle is the dialectic of faith and reality. This situation of poverty is subjected to analysis in the light of a socio- or historico-analysis and in the light of faith. In CA's case, this moment is contextualised through development and through the concept of God's new earth. The question is asked, having 'understood the real situation of the oppressed,... what has the word of God to say about this?' (Boff & Boff 1987, 32) The situation on the ground becomes contextualised in the faith of the community.

The third step then is to understand the faith from the reflection on reality as a community. Taking as the starting point people's reality and their analysis of this reality means that the faith is understood in the light of reality. 'This is a critical hermeneutical theology, engaged in a continuous process of interpreting *realidad* and the Christian faith in order to produce a praxis of transformation.' (Althaus-Reid 2000, 389) The community comes to analyse faith in the light of their reality and their socio-analysis. They are looking for 'light and inspiration from the divine word.' (Boff & Boff 1987, 32) This inspiration is for further action, continuing the hermeneutic circle.

Finally, there is appropriation of the faith into further action, praxis. 'The text that has been read must produce a change at the level of consciousness of the community who have interpreted it.' (Althaus-Reid 2000, 389) The change can be seen in the new practice of the community. As the Boffs state: 'it starts from action and leads to action... from analysis of the reality of the oppressed, it passes through the word of God to arrive finally at specific action.' (Boff & Boff 1987, 39) In this way, the hermeneutic circle will continue to move forward.

In her papers on theology and campaigning, Dudley began to develop a grid, which is useful to highlight this discussion. She divides the possibilities into three parts: 1. Making the implicit theology explicit, which is part of reflecting on the action; 2. Informing the churches; and 3. Informing policy, both of which are part of appropriating the reflection into praxis. (Dudley 2001) Each of the steps in the hermeneutic circle is addressed in turn, in this and the following chapters.

## 2.1 In this action reflection process, is there reflection on the action in community?

The strongest example of the presence of reflection in community provides the basis for the discussions in the following chapters: a workshop entitled 'God and the Global Economy' held in one of the UK regions. This day-long workshop was set up 'for reflection and discussion on faith and economic justice in an age of globalisation.'

(God and the Global Economy, [2000]) Such workshops have occurred in several UK regions, attended by CA staff members and local volunteers. The Adult Christian Education Adviser co-ordinated this particular event, which had over 50 people present. The Senior Policy Officer on Trade and Globalisation, Melamed, spoke 'on globalisation and why it matters.' To make the link to theology, a CA staff member was not used. Instead, Timothy Gorringer, a professor of theology at the University of Exeter, presented on 'tools and approaches for doing theology in an age of globalisation.' Excerpts from this event will be used to elaborate the theological issues emerging throughout the thesis. This chapter focuses on other examples to show how the hermeneutic circle is implemented at CA.

In the workshop at the C&C department conference, Dudley began by explaining the method of action and reflection to the group. She used a modification of the hermeneutic circle, which she attributed to Michael Taylor, former director of CA. He discussed a spiral of reflection and 'committed action,' each building on the other, rather than a circle. (Dudley 2000b, 2) The change from a circle to a spiral was to emphasise that it is ever increasing.

Reading and reflecting on reality and the Bible alongside each other presuppose that the past, the Bible, can be related to the present, reality. This concept is the unity of history, introduced previously. The faith and the reality are both set into history and can be analysed together. When the staff members follow this process of action and reflection, they accept this understanding of unity as well.

Part of this workshop was a brainstorming session on spirituality and trade. We broke down first into small groups and then presented our thoughts to the plenary. The majority of the suggestions focused on changes that individuals could make in their own lives. They were concerned that people take the global community into account with their daily actions. However, at the local level they focused on the individual, mentioning individual sin rather than structures of sin. This is in direct contrast to the example of CEAS provided in the fourth chapter where discussion focuses on the local community and its relation to structures.

In this workshop, structural change was not raised as an issue by the participants; the facilitator had to introduce the topic. Dudley, as the group facilitator, pushed them to consider structures as they are to be the focus of the new campaign. This question arises often in the action reflection process: to what extent should people be pointed in a certain



direction when they, as a community, are reflecting together. This balance is difficult to achieve and itself requires constant reflection.<sup>8</sup>

The participants in this workshop assumed that this level of theological support was already in place in the organisation; however, it was not. Dudley, to stimulate future discussion, presented to the group her own ideas for considering structural change theologically. She suggested three areas for further reflection. First, there can be limits placed on the market as the Old Testament emphasises. Second, the gap between the rich and the poor can be discussed in terms of community. Third, the emphasis on money and profit in the market can be related to idolatry. Each of these concepts is further explored in the third and fourth chapters. In this group, however, they did not take the discussion further. Yet, they were keen to ensure that such a conversation did take place within CA.

After this conference, a cross-organisational theology lunchtime discussion group was set up to ensure that this type of reflection continued in CA practice. In this way, staff members throughout CA were encouraged to continue the dialogue, instead of sitting back and waiting for a theology for the campaign to be produced. Although Dudley had to introduce certain elements, the staff members and supporters did take them on board and continued the reflection process over time. There were several meetings of the group over the next year, although they have since tapered off.

The topic of the first meeting was a paper on globalisation written by the Senior Policy Officer for Trade and Globalisation in the Global Advocacy team. (Green and Melamed 2000) There were more than twenty staff members present, including several from the international department. However, no one was present from the Global Advocacy (policy) team. Thus, there could be no feedback to that team from the discussion.

In this meeting, the topic of trade generated much reflection that contained analysis both of the policy and of the theology that supported particular policies. There was consideration of the fact that a focus on trade seems to have the underlying assumption that 'I buy and sell, therefore I am.' There was discussion of the fact that such a mentality has a theological basis in a market or prosperity theology.<sup>9</sup> One participant, a regional team leader, argued that this seemed to deny the humanity of some

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<sup>8</sup> There is always a tension in community as to when to advise or intervene. CEAS too reflects on this question as the fourth chapter explores. See Brown 1994 for a detailed analysis of this situation.

<sup>9</sup> This concept is addressed further in the following chapters. It refers to a type of theology that celebrates the market and sees wealth as a reward for good work and poverty as a result of laziness. See 'The New Right Paradigm- Blame the Poor' in White and Tiongco 1997, 48-57.

people who cannot or do not want to participate in the market. He addressed the case of Africa specifically. It only makes up 4% of the volume of trade in the world. In that theology, Africa would not count. Setting this alongside the fact that all human beings are made in God's image, such a concept cannot be true. For this participant, upholding increased trade as the goal, then, is unacceptable theologically.

This idea can be contrasted with the positions that DfID, CA and CAFOD take about international trade. DfID argued in its White Paper that trade is positive and will help the poor escape poverty. (UK Department for International Development 2000) CA policy does not assume that international trade will inevitably be positive. The Campaigns Officer emphasised in the TLDG that DfID was too reliant on the private sector, lacking a focus on inequality. Instead, CA argues that, if properly managed, international trade can lead to poverty eradication. However, each community should be able to work out for itself what type of trade is in its best interests. (Green and Melamed 2000) The discussion in the TLDG moved away from CA policy and began to challenge it. However, the policy was not subsequently changed. While there was reflection on the action in community, this reflection was not able to influence further action in this case.

There was further questioning of whether a focus on economics alone could be supported theologically, a concept CEAS rejects. Tiongco questioned the policy paper's equating globalisation with economic liberalisation<sup>10</sup>, a point considered in the following chapter. He asked from a faith perspective 'is there no set of rules outside the economy?.' Instead of considering this wider point, the discussion then narrowed again to asking 'how do you know when an economy is working?.' In this meeting, there were no conclusions drawn, rather people were able to voice different opinions emerging from the various parts of the organisation. The questions were raised, but left unanswered at this level.

For staff members in the C&C department, this process of action and reflection should occur both in churches and in CA communities. Tiongco encourages this open reflection in his team in the Northwest of England. He shared his ways of stimulating reflection with C&C department staff at the CA all-staff conference. He tested out on them a series of workshops he had developed, which examined scripture on various aspects of trade. His goal was to get the churches thinking about issues related to faith and trade. Dudley, too, in her workshop at the C&C department conference provided

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<sup>10</sup> See the glossary for a definition of liberalisation.

several different examples of church agencies dealing with the links between theology and economy. For example, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches has asked its congregations to engage with economic issues. Also, the Church of England conducted a consultation process, which resulted in a publication entitled *Faith in a Global Economy*. (General Synod 1998) Dudley wants these and other initiatives to be integrated by CA supporters and staff members in their actions. Thus, she and others provide models for action and reflection.

In concluding, a note of qualification has to be added. Though there is a process of reflection on the reality taking place throughout the organisation, as the following chapter analyses, the location for the theological reflection is limited to the C&C department, including the God and the Global Economy workshop. Opportunities for discussion outside the C&C department were devoid of theological reflection, even at the all-staff conference.

## 2.2 Is this process made clear to all CA staff?

‘I find the question of what is Christian Aid’s theology ... not baffling. ... It’s just something which I don’t myself have a very clear picture of because I hear different things from different parts of the organisation.’ (Interview 18, 2000)

This method, because it tends to be discussed only within the C&C department, is not clear to all CA staff. For example, at the C&C department conference, the head of the Campaigns team suggested in his presentation on the policy of the campaign that those with questions about the underlying theology should attend the workshop to be presented by the Adult Christian Education Adviser later in the afternoon. Dudley, the facilitator for this workshop, immediately countered that those attending the workshop should be prepared to do the work rather than to be given the answers. The Campaigns Strategy Paper mirrored this misconception, stating that in terms of the development of the theology for the campaign: ‘Dudley has already begun work on this, and will continue.’ (Trade for Life [200], 12) The Adult Christian Education Adviser was to be responsible for the theology.

A similar discrepancy arose from the reflections by the SCAC on the trade campaign, about a year after its launch.<sup>11</sup> In the regions, the advocacy through

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<sup>11</sup> The SCAC meeting highlighted here had 24 people present including one overseas partner from the Dominican Republic, seven CA staff members, two CA board members, four co-opted members, and representatives from the Baptist Church, Church of Scotland, Congregational Federation, Methodist Church, Quakers, Scottish Episcopal Church, and the United Free Church.

campaigning is seen to provide the churches with a further means of action. However, the discussion about trade in this SCAC meeting centred on the fact that churches had not yet taken on board this new campaign. The first action for the churches was to sign a pledge committing themselves to the campaign. These signed pledges should then have been sent to the relevant MPs. Yet, there were only two local churches, which were known to have done this.

The committee suggested that there needed to be powerful case studies linked to theological reflection to share with the churches to get their attention. The head of the Scottish team suggested that perhaps a list from the Campaigns team of 'seven deadly rules' could be re-titled the 'seven deadly sins.' These rules are detailed in the following chapter. In this way, theological language could be used to get the churches' attention. However, at this point in the campaign, there was still no way to show the churches that the rules were linked to particular theological issues.

Staff members in the C&C department also noted that supporters often do not realise that this process of action and reflection is occurring. In the workshop on theology and campaigning at the C&C department conference, Dudley asked whether the action reflection process began with action or faith. Martin Nicholls, a regional staff member, spoke from his experience of how Christians do put their faith into action every day but are unsure of how to do this through CA. Eildon Dyer, a Scottish staff member, on the other hand, has dealt with people who simply do not put their faith into action. Thus, CA has to find a way not only to continue using this methodology but also to make it clear to staff members and supporters that such work is occurring.

Dudley agreed that CA should be able to show more clearly the action reflection process occurring. She referred back to the Jubilee 2000 campaign on debt.<sup>12</sup> During that campaign, at least two books were published by CA discussing theology and debt. The first was *Proclaim Liberty: Reflections on Theology and Debt*, containing articles by several different people involved with CA. (Christian Aid 1998) The second was written by Michael Northcott, a reader in theology at the University of Edinburgh, who introduced Christian themes on debt arising from local situations around the world. (Northcott 1999)

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<sup>12</sup> CA was part of this international campaign centred on cancelling the debt of the world's poorest countries by the year 2000. While the campaign itself is not detailed in this thesis, certain theological starting points will be referred to throughout these chapters because there was a distinct link made between the campaign and the Old Testament concept of the Jubilee. For further information on the campaign see <http://www.jubilee2000uk.org>. See Arruda 1999 for a Brazilian analysis of the debt situation and the international campaign.

Despite these publications, Dudley argues that there could have been more emphasis given to the theological process in CA, which a secular organisation like Oxfam, does not have.<sup>13</sup> Because of this process CA should be able to provide a direct link between its practice and its faith base. Her distinction is one that CA's director does not make. This is reflected in the lack of formal integration of theology with other departments.

The TWG meetings began to expand the discussion of the process of action and reflection, sharing this reflection with the organisation as a whole. Its first meeting involved five people from the C&C department, including the heads of the Churches team and Church & Community department. Dudley and Tiongco were present at nearly every TWG meeting. Mukarji and others in the international department received the notes but were not present. In order to make the group cross-organisational, the participants decided that each team at CA would have one person responsible for reading the meeting agenda and notes to determine if there was relevance to their team.

The participants questioned to what extent the theological project should be limited to action and reflection and then the formalisation of this process. For example, should there be a person hired to help with the 'theological ferment'? The group agreed that someone should have responsibility for this process. However, not all the participants in the TWG agreed with the idea of hiring someone for this purpose from outside the organisation. Dudley, in particular, noted that such a person would lack an understanding of the internal process of theological reflection in CA. No one, either internally or externally, has been given the responsibility for this 'fermentation.' There was to be dedicated time added to some staff members' job descriptions. Tiongco suggested that it could be described as 'drawing out the reflection that is already occurring at CA,' rather than 'creating new theology.' However, this issue of allocated time for theology work arose in subsequent meetings and has not yet been resolved.

Because the theological reflection occurs in different communities at CA, there should be a mechanism put in place to integrate the results or at least to present them more formally to the organisation as a whole. In a true process of action and reflection, CA would draw together the theological threads of staff members, UK supporters, and overseas partners for this fermentation.

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<sup>13</sup> In fact, it is possible for the process of action and reflection to be expanded out from Christian theology to spirituality in general. Oxfam too could have such a process, which would be an area for further research.

### 2.3 Is the reflection critical both of the action and of the faith or spirituality?

This question will be answered in more detail in the second and third chapters. However, the starting points are defined in this section. Often, even those participating in the hermeneutic circle question how consistent or explicit CA's theology is. The Adult Christian Education Adviser contends that it is consistent in the Churches team, in the material it provides for the churches. Yet, there is no one responsible within the rest of the organisation for theological reflection. Apart from the question of responsibility lies the problem of implementing the method.

Essential to this method is a 'hermeneutic of suspicion.' This means that neither policy/practice nor faith/spirituality is taken as dogma; rather both are reflected upon in light of the other. The practice has to be subject to suspicion and the scripture or faith also has to be subject to suspicion. Participating in the process implies that the community is willing for opinions on practice and faith to be shifted.

Both aspects of suspicion need to be considered carefully by those participating in the process. If only theological reflection that supports the action is considered, then the process is turned into a search for self-justification, not the hermeneutic of suspicion that will impact further action. This appears to be the case in CA's process. The elements that do not support the policy seem to be discarded because they do not lend support.

At times, there is no theological input into the beginnings of a CA project. For example, during the planning of the new campaign on trade, the Churches team had to decide on an agenda for their day of reflection. One suggestion was to spend time discussing with the Campaigns team how to relate theology to the trade campaign. This was set to one side because the Campaigns team had not yet developed the policy. One of the Adult Christian Education Advisers argued that it would be beneficial to sit down with the Campaigns team at the beginning to discuss the links between scripture and trade, instead of waiting for the policy to be decided upon first. However, another agenda was chosen.

Later, when the policy for the campaign had been chosen there was an attempt to reflect on it theologically. However, where the reflection differed from policy, it was left to one side. Five people from CA spent a day together, outside of Birmingham, reflecting on how to integrate policy and theology in the campaign. The Adult Christian Education Adviser facilitated the meeting and I was present along with two regional team leaders and a Campaigns Team Officer. The goal of the day was to present a

theological rationale for the campaign. So from the outset the campaign policy would determine the starting point for reflection.

During the day, the discussion covered various aspects of international trade and globalisation and potential theological points for reflection. One example is the concept of divine abundance, detailed in the third chapter. Dudley emphasised that God provided all that people needed in abundance, referring to the Old Testament story of manna from heaven. In contrast, capitalism is based on scarcity, the idea that there is a finite amount of resources, which enhances fear and greed. This greed prioritises the individual over the community. If divine abundance were emphasised instead, it could lead to a rejection of fear, greed and individualism because there will always be enough for everyone. Greed is impossible in the manna story because those who tried to gather extra for later found it spoiled. Yet every morning there was more on the ground.

The Campaigns Officer responded that the focus could not be on a theological rejection of capitalism because the campaign is not anti-capitalist. Although the theological reflection was leading toward a different policy, the Campaigns Officer turned the subject back to the accepted policy. The conversation between the two diverging themes could not continue. Yet, despite the reining in of the conversation in this meeting, similar theological concepts and their difference to policy emerged over the following months. Thus, other theological reflection needs to be considered and responded to, not simply passed over.

Instead of allowing theological reflection to be critical of the policy, the Campaigns team asked the Churches team to comment on the possibility for a theology of trade rules to bolster their argument that trade needs to have fairer rules. In response, I produced a bibliography on theology and trade and Dudley and Tiongco put together lists of scriptures that deal with various rules and regulations, some of which are cited in the following chapters. Both pieces were designed to stimulate discussion rather than to present a particular theological point of view.

Often, the material created by the C&C department uses the policy team language on globalisation, giving further credence to the lack of suspicion of the policy and practice. From CA to the churches, theological discussions begin with a summary of policy. For example, a short paper by Tiongco entitled 'Global Liberalisation and the Poor and the Vulnerable' (Tiongco 2001a) begins by addressing 'The Situation Under Global Liberalisation.' It takes comments directly from the CA paper on globalisation. (Green and Melamed, 2000)

‘Interconnectedness has been driven by the liberalisation of trade, investment and capital flows, as well as by rapid technological change and the development of ever newer and faster communications technology. The combination has led to huge increases in both the quantity and the speed of international trade and financial flows.’

Tiongco does not cite from his own work on development instead adopting the policy team language.

When other theological positions are not considered, it is then difficult to determine how CA’s theology can be differentiated from that of others whose reflection leads them to a critique of the development process. CA reflection itself includes many elements from liberation theology critical of development, as the following chapters show. The Adult Christian Education Adviser has distinguished CA’s theology and practice from that of others as pragmatism rather than prophecy. As an example she discussed the notion of power. On the pragmatic side, it is a matter of using power correctly like consumer power to purchase fairly traded products. On the other hand, in God’s kingdom there would be no power inequality; that is the prophetic side. Yet, while this distinction is possible, it cannot be concluded without consideration of both theological viewpoints. While CA does not consider power further, it is central to CEAS, as the fourth chapter explores.

The second aspect of the hermeneutic of suspicion is the suspicion of faith or Scripture. Peter Graystone, a Adult Christian Education Adviser in the Churches team, works to produce prayers, Bible studies and other opportunities for the churches to reflect. He stated that it was important for people to realise that the Bible could not simply be read superficially to find the verses that mention trade. The same is true of citing Bible verses in general. For example, the annual CA reports tend to quote Bible verses throughout without further explanation, assuming that they support CA policy. Carlos Mesters, a theologian working in base Christian communities in Brazil, has noted that the same problem arises with the reading of the Bible in base communities. It is possible that the discussion will not be deepened.<sup>14</sup> This problem can relate back to that of how far the facilitator should intervene to ensure the process is implemented fully.

Similarly, Tiongco has distinguished between being evangelical and critical and evangelical and uncritical. He describes himself as an evangelical Christian in the sense that whenever he is trying to work out a faith-related question he tries to ascertain what

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<sup>14</sup> See Mesters 1993 for further analysis of this problem.

the Bible says. The Bible is his starting point. However, no one should limit themselves to a literal transference of terms.

‘The Bible is not a book that provides a code of conduct. We cannot copy the words- the codes we find in scriptures- and simply apply them to our situation today. What we have is a ... statement of how faith in Yahweh confronts a social reality. What we need is to capture that spirit and to find a way of living it out in our situation...’ (Tiongco 2001b, 2)

Treating the Bible as a code of conduct to be copied entails a ‘correspondence of terms,’ where, for example, the word oppression could be substituted for Egypt, or liberation for exodus.<sup>15</sup> In contrast, Tiongco addresses the primary question of where help can be found in the Bible, with more work to be done on relating that scripture to today’s situation. Such work should also occur in community.

Each of these points is considered further as the thesis progresses. The second chapter reflects critically on CA policy and practice on trade and globalisation: the reality. The third chapter then reflects critically on the emerging theological concepts. The fourth chapter explores this critical reflection from a different location, that of a Brazilian partner, to show how partner reflection can contribute to the process in CA.

#### 2.4 Does the reflection influence further action?

Crucial to the hermeneutic circle is that it is implemented as a circle. There has to be reflection on the action. Both the spirituality and the reality have to be subject to suspicion. Finally, the reflection has to impact future praxis.

This influence currently occurs at an informal and nearly always implicit level at CA. For example, at one of the SCAC meetings, the participants discussed four options for a new CA campaign, circulated by the Campaigns team.<sup>16</sup> Each regional team was to choose the option they preferred from the following four: Conflict and Displacement; Globalisation and Inequality; Poverty and Health; Trade and Food. The SCAC members immediately chose to focus on the Globalisation issue, stating they liked the idea of fighting this battle.

‘The globalisation of technology, communications, trade and finance is a reality. While they may be beneficial to some,

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<sup>15</sup> For further analysis of this method see Boff and Boff 1987, 143-146. Leonardo Boff is a Brazilian liberation theologian and professor. His brother, Clodovis, is also a liberation theologian and a Servite priest.

<sup>16</sup> This meeting had 31 participants. The only change from the previous meeting was that there was no overseas partner present and more representatives from the churches.

many poorer people, communities and nations are losing out and becoming increasingly marginalised. Power has become concentrated in the hands of big players, including the rich nations (G7), with transnational corporations (TNCs) having an increasingly dominant and unaccountable role in the global economy.' (untitled document)

This topic focused on inequalities of power and wealth and the role of multinational companies. The committee also felt that trade could be integrated into this topic, to ensure that people could participate directly in action to change the global situation through the use of their consumer power.

Part of their reason for choosing this topic emerged from their ethical and theological reflection. Different committee members linked the inequalities in globalisation and trade back to the theology of the previous campaigns, particularly the reflection on debt from the Jubilee scriptures. They also linked it more generally to CA's faith base, emphasising the focus on life before death and living simply. The minutes reflect this:

'the way forward is a compilation of issue 2, 'Globalisation and Inequality,' and issue 4, 'Trade and Food,' for campaigning although people felt strongly about, 'Conflict and Displacement.' Using 2 and 4 would not only allow people to move on from trade and debt, but would also take it back to some former things such as living simply to that others might simply live.' (Scottish Christian Aid Committee 1999)

In fact, the campaign now does combine the two elements. Thus, this reflection did impact future praxis.

The Scottish team also called for more formal reflection on theology and trade. The team plan stated, 'we will seek to involve the Campaigns team in a discussion to develop good Bible Study material for use in local churches and aim to devise a launch strategy for the new campaign.' (Christian Aid Scotland: The One Year Plan 2000-01) Yet when the Scottish team asked theological questions of the Campaigns team, they were referred to the Churches team or they were left to produce the reflection themselves.

Previously, there was more explicit ethical and theological influence on praxis. CA had a staff member in place in the policy department to bring together ethical reflection on policy. There was a Policy Officer for Social Ethics and Economic Justice, located in the Global Advocacy department.<sup>17</sup> The Policy Officer co-ordinated both UK

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<sup>17</sup> This department has since been downgraded to one team within the International Department (ID). Previously, there was a Research and Policy department, which was renamed Global Advocacy. In

and partner reflection. However, this job was terminated a few months before this thesis research began. Subsequently, the position has not been refilled. The work of the Ethics Officer would have formed one of the foci of this research. However, when the position disappeared the work was transferred to the Churches team. The main difference in the organisation then became that any theological question was put to the Churches team alone.

This downgrading of theological reflection also impacted the reaction to my volunteering with CA. Instead of beginning my volunteer position with the theological research tasks, previously decided, they were put to one side for nearly two months. This delay was due to the fact that they were unsure of whether or not there would be a new Ethics Officer, or at least a handing over of the work to a paid member of staff. Although some staff members, including Dudley and Tiongco, still argue that there needs to be someone responsible for the integration of the theological process with policy, no steps have been taken in this direction.

The formal effort to co-ordinate the ethical and theological discussion of policy related matters disappeared as the tasks of the job were not handed over. Instead, the Adult Christian Education Adviser took charge of the books and materials associated with the position. Her two and a half day per week position was subsequently to include matters relating to what was previously the full time Ethics Officer position. At the same time, the TWG was created to maintain an organisation-wide discussion of CA's theological project.

The disappearance of this Ethics position reinforces the general picture of a decreasing focus on the hermeneutic circle in CA over the past several years. Under the directorship of Elliott at the end of the 1980s, CA overtly questioned the place of faith in the process of development. Many of the overseas partners challenged CA to introduce more theological reflection into their work. In response, CA co-launched a Master's degree in Theology and Development with the University of Edinburgh's Divinity

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the 2000-2004 plan there was a comment that 'there will no longer be a post defined to cover theology' with the proviso that this 'is not to say that theology will be overlooked in the Department's output.' (Policy and Research Department-Plan for 2000/2004 [2000], 3) Thus, the Ethics position was cut. In this department there had also been two policy teams. The International Policy team carried 'out research and lobbying on issues of international economic justice, including trade, debt and economic reform.' It also supported 'CA's corporate campaigns.' (Policy at Christian Aid [1999]) The Ethics Officer was in this team focusing on 'social ethics, corruption, globalisation and culture.' The Senior Policy Officer on Trade and Globalisation was located here too focusing on 'trade, investment, WTO.' [1999] There was also a Development Policy team, which carried 'out research and lobbying to promote improvements in official and non-governmental poverty eradication policies, including the quality of aid.' [1999] This department has disappeared altogether, replaced by the Global Advocacy team in the ID.

Faculty in 1990. Tiongco was in charge of this course for the first years. CA funded more than ten partners per year to complete this course. Throughout this time, the participants from the partner countries consistently critiqued CA's acceptance of the concept of development, particularly its lack of analysis of the current global situation. CEAS continues to critique this acceptance. However, none of this work is referred to currently. During the 1990s, CA's sponsorship of the students slowed and the degree is no longer linked to CA.

Toward the end of the 1990s, in an effort to engage formally again with theology and policy, the ethics officer position was created. The directorship, along with several managerial positions, then changed hands and the focus on theology at a formal level has again diminished. Several staff members with theological experience have left during the past few years, including Dudley in 2002. There was no one remaining at directorate level with formal ethical or theological training at the end of my research period.

In contrast to the former Policy Department, the international department does not mention theological reflection. The head of the department defined their work as development, advocacy, policy and lobbying. As part of the research, I intended to move to the policy team for three months to confirm that no theological reflection occurred. Instead, the head of the international department suggested that I remain with the Churches team as that was where the theological reflection was located.

Throughout the development of the trade campaign and its policy, there has been a lack of integration of the theological reflection. The draft paper on trade policy, later published as *Trade for Life*, contained no theological reflection. (Curtis<sup>18</sup> 2001) There was some discussion of adding an appendix. However, one person quickly noted that this would be treating theology as something that could simply be added on to support the policy, which is criticised by some CA supporters already. The TWG participants agreed that the best solution would be a theological edit of the book, which also did not occur. Instead, there was to be a separate set of comments on theology and trade published jointly by CA and CAFOD. However, though Dudley worked with CAFOD staff members to produce the book *Turn the Tables*, it was eventually published by CAFOD alone.<sup>19</sup> (Dudley and Jones 2003) Thus, no theological reflection on trade has so far been published by CA, in contrast to the publications on theology and debt during the previous campaign.

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<sup>18</sup> Mark Curtis is head of the Global Advocacy team at CA.

<sup>19</sup> This book focuses on the understanding of human beings as both citizens and consumers in today's society.

In contrast to the lack of theological input, throughout the development of the trade campaign, other parts of the organisation were debating what policies would be appropriate. For example, the policy team held a staff discussion forum on trade. Issues included 'whether CA believes free markets exist or are a good thing' and 'whether we believe some essentials should be outside the market place.' (Development and Advocacy Forum [2000]). No theological reflection occurred, although the questions themselves are ethical. No one from the Churches team attended the meeting. Neither were the notes discussed in future Churches team meetings.

The failure to influence policy at this stage meant that ethical and theological questions continued to arise throughout the launch of the campaign and since. However, outside the C&C department there is less agreement that theological input into policy is needed. Even the Campaigns Officer, who interacts with the Churches team, does not see a place for formal input. The Campaigns team did have a Churches' advisory group in the planning stages. This group was made up of people interested in development work from the UK churches. However, no theological discussions took place. When the question of creating a theological advisory group arose, the response from the Campaigns team was that developing policy for the campaign was difficult enough without the question of theology arising. There was also a suggestion that there could be a piece of research completed into the theology of the campaign. However, the Campaigns team responded that instead of a job being created, there could be a day of reflection on theology or perhaps an email forum, to reflect informally.

Taylor, former director of CA, faced similar challenges of integration during his time with the organisation. There was scepticism among the staff that Christian doctrine could contribute to development policies. (Taylor 2000, 69-70) Staff members found theology to be 'theoretical' rather than practical. Not all staff members defined theology as faith-based action. They also did not have a clear picture of the process of action and reflection.

Some staff members argued that there was no one within CA that had the skills to deploy the methods of Christian social theology and social ethics to good effect. Taylor did introduce the Ethics Officer position in response to this concern. The Ethics Officer also dealt with the first two issues, making theology accessible and relevant to the policy work. Not only has her position been cut but also while the post existed some staff members did not understand the point of integration.

Further, Taylor does not address the distinction between a systematic theology and one that is issue-based. He stated that some staff members felt that even if Christian

teaching was to be taken seriously, it is unclear which tradition could be adhered to, since CA represents forty different churches. This systematic/issue-based distinction is explored in the following chapters. Right dogma, or orthopraxis, comes from right action. Thus, in responding to the process of action and reflection it is never static.

Finally, the staff members saw a divide between a theological rejection of poverty and the technical means to reduce poverty, according to Taylor. What that separation ignores is that there are also theological issues emerging from each of the possible ways to reduce poverty in this globalised world, which are analysed in the third and fourth chapters. In addition, this divide of secular and Christian responses reflects the UK culture but is rejected by many of the partners with which CA works. The loss of the Master's course in theology and development along with the loss of the Ethics Officer glosses over this problem. As there is no place for partners' theological reflection, their views tend to disappear.

Yet, Taylor does not argue for completing the spiral of action and reflection at CA. He does not specify that the reflection should impact further action. Instead, he would like the dialogue with the churches to sit alongside a dialogue with Christian partners. CA produces literature for devotional and educational purposes, which emphasises the 'biblical evidence in support of the struggle to end poverty.' (Taylor 2000, 71) Thus, CA should continue dialoguing with the churches. General CA literature too reflects some theological thinking as 'even statements of faith were espoused by CA in its mission statements.' (71) CA can also dialogue with its supporters in general.

This theological thinking, however, does not have to impact policy. 'Having made up our minds we can then ask whether the judgment we have made is in harmony with or coherent with our understanding of Christian doctrine and teaching, whether set out systematically or in narrative form as the Story we tell.' (Taylor 2000, 92-3) Thus, he accepts the secularisation of the policy, stating that it can be questioned outside of CA theologically but does not have to be within CA. He allows for part of the hermeneutic circle but limits its exposure to those already interested in faith questions at an individual level rather than allowing a merging of the secular and theological in CA as a whole to complete the process of action and reflection.

This limitation then leads to the final question.

## 2.5 How are CA's overseas partners involved in this method?

The previous section began to address the question of the involvement of overseas CA partners noting that with the end of the Master's degree and the departure of the Ethics Officer there was no formal place at CA for partner theological reflection. One of the tasks planned for my volunteer work was to consider how to continue the contacts with the theologians in the South. This included how to set up their input into the theological content of the CA website. However, both of these tasks were set to one side as the organisation debated whether a paid member of staff would take on this responsibility. There has been no continuation of either of these elements in the past three years. The international department focuses on the partner organisations in the South but has no mechanisms for dealing with theology.

CA's partners overseas then are completely missing from this process of action and reflection. The one exception to this situation is the occasional presence of a partner at a regional workshop, meeting or conference. For example, there was a partner representative present at the C&C department staff conference, Bishop Ninan. Some of his reflections on theology and the campaign, presented to the plenary, are taken up in the third chapter. However, his concepts were not referred to thereafter except by the director in the closing address to the conference.

Similarly, my work with CEAS found that there was little discussion of CA policies, except when the re-applications for funding were due. The arrival of the trade campaign material was particularly telling. A thick package arrived in the post from CA. It was opened and brought to one of the co-ordination meetings, with all the heads of team. One person noted that this material had arrived and it was set to one side. It was all in English and thus played no further role in CEAS discussions. This is not to say that CEAS never discussed trade, or was not aware of the trade campaign, as there is regular communication between the CA Brazil Programme Officer and staff members at CEAS. However, the trade campaign was in no way central to their practice and they had no way of interacting with CA with regard to theology or policy. It is only when CA staff members travel to Brazil occasionally that such interaction occurs.

Yet, the head of the international department has stated that partnership is the main focus of the international department and all other foci come underneath this rubric. CA works with and through partners. One point is to strengthen the goal of 'making the voices of the poor heard.' So where are these voices when it comes to the process of action and reflection? How can they speak?

The majority of these partners are related in some way to Christian churches. CEAS, for example, is Jesuit-based, although it deals with those of all faiths and none in Salvador. Even in situations where the partners are not Christian, they may still be faith-based. For example, in Afghanistan, CA works with Muslim partners, whose perspective could be crucial for the development of a truly multi-faith policy.

The head of the Global Advocacy (policy) team specified that this team also roots their work in the experiences of overseas partners. The purpose of advocacy is to say that the system is not working for the majority. The importance placed on this rooting then leads back to a question of why the post of Ethics Officer was cut. The interaction of faith-based partners with staff members in the international department includes theological questions. The Ethics Officer's role was to help co-ordinate such reflection. The fourth chapter provides an example of the wealth of theological reflection that can emerge from the faith-based (but not solely Christian) partners that CA is unable to access currently.

## Initial Reflections

CA has learned much already through its process of action and reflection. Staff members and supporters are engaged with the topics of theology and development as the examples in this chapter showed. Yet, while CA does have a process of action and reflection, it does not fully or consistently implement this hermeneutic circle. The theological reflection does not always impact further action. Further, most of this reflection is limited to the Church & Community department. Consideration of the method in process at CA and at CEAS in the following chapters illuminates areas for improvement that are then addressed in the conclusion.

CA is clear that it defines theology as faith-based action. Staff members and supporters are also clear that theology is not spread from the top-down but emerges from the action and reflection of staff members, supporters, and partners together. Dudley has ensured that many staff members and supporters are aware of the hermeneutic circle by encouraging reflection on it in particular settings, including the regional staff conference and TWG meetings. She has also aimed to improve this process as her grid showed: making the implicit theology explicit, informing the churches, and informing policy.

There is reflection on CA's actions across the organisation. The Church and Community department itself encourages theological reflection on development issues. The department conference usually has a theological focus. At one such conference, Dudley's workshop on theology and campaigning had more than one third of the total conference attendees participating, although there were seven options for that time slot. The director was also present.

CA explains the need for theological reflection in part as a consequence of the churches' ownership of CA. CA expects theology to drive the action and it expects that its actions and those of its churches and partners will be further challenged by the theology. This can continue to occur with further implementation of the hermeneutic circle. It can also be aided by further participation by the churches and partners in that hermeneutic circle. For the policy to be underpinned by faith, as Clare Short assumed it was, there has to be a process in place that allows theological reflection on that policy. The participants in the workshop at the conference were clear that while faith drives the action, CA could do more. CA could challenge people's faith. CA could also examine itself as a structure to make sure that it is reflecting theologically on all of its own actions.

To reach a wider audience, the Church & Community department has created the TWG and the TLDG. The head of the C & C department realises that staff members and

supporters want more theological discussion and reflection. The TWG has been expanded from its initial participation in the first meeting of five people to about twenty-three participants now. These participants include staff members from the different departments. At the same time, there has been discussion of how theological reflection could be formalised in terms of job descriptions, although no action was taken in this regard during the research period.

The TLDG was also well attended in the beginning. Yet, no one is charged with ensuring this reflection impacts the action. For example, setting up a note taker to record some of the conversations could start this process. Policy team members could then have access to these and other notes in order to become aware of the faith issues. The trade campaign, for example, could make clear that trade is not necessarily the answer. Thus, it is clear that while steps are being taken to move the hermeneutic circle forward, more could be done.

There is also much reflection occurring throughout the regions, in concert with the churches. The Scottish staff members and supporters are engaging with questions of faith and development, as the interviews showed. Some of that reflection does impact further action through informal channels. Staff members in the regions are particularly well placed to contribute to the faith reflection through their contacts with the churches.

The Churches team in London also encourages churches to reflect. Two new staff members were recruited during my time at CA to focus on the black majority churches and the new churches, which traditionally have not held a sense of ownership over CA. Such encouragement could continue with the addition of formal means of bringing that reflection back into the organisation. This could also help to emphasise the churches' ownership of CA.

At the same time, there is some reflection with partners, when those partners visit the UK. Such reflection could be further supported, as CA sees itself in partnership with many overseas agencies and organisations. There is no formal gathering of partner theology, although attempts were made when there was an ethics officer. The fourth chapter will detail the case of one partner to show how engaging with partners could move the conversation forward. Further, as some of CA's partners are based in other faiths, reflection could produce a multi-faith perspective.

There is a need to spread the theological reflection out from the C & C department, to engage the International department, and others, the UK churches and the overseas partners. Part of the problem is that not all staff members, churches and partners are aware of this process of action and reflection. The director, for example,

assumes that such a process will automatically occur and there is not a need to formally integrate the results of the reflection. However, a position like that held by the former ethics officer could ensure that the reflection, and its results, could be spread throughout CA. Using events like the all-staff conference to explore issues of faith and action in particular development topics could be another step forward. During the time of this research, the regional staff conference contained more faith-based reflection on the issues than the all-staff conference, contributing to the separation of theology and development rather than its integration.

There could also be dedicated time for theological reflection in staff members' job descriptions, throughout the organisation, and in particular, in the C & C department. There was much material produced specifically for worship in the churches by the Churches team during the period of research, but less theological material on current development issues. There is no analysis published linking the worship material to the development issues, an important middle step that could help to ensure critical reflection on both the faith and the action. Staff members in the regions, for example, did not have access to a strong theological statement about trade with which to push forward the campaign in the churches. Most of the written reflection and analysis by staff members in these areas came from papers produced outside of their working hours.

Similarly, while reflection is critical of action and faith, care should be taken to ensure that both action and faith are consistently subject to suspicion. Neither should be decided beforehand, with the other chosen simply for self-justification. Such has been one of the problems with the beginnings of the trade campaign. The second and third chapters explore this further. Some of the theological reflection detailed in the third chapter criticises rather than supports some of the policy already chosen. The final conclusion returns to this discussion, examining ways of reconciling the policy and theology.

Beyond this, there is no formal way for reflection to feed back into further action. This differs from when there was an ethics officer, who was located in the policy department. Now there is no staff time allocated to theology in the international department. For example, the book published on the trade campaign contained no theological reflection. Even the reflection later published as *Turn the Tables* ended up as a Cafod publication alone, not linked with CA.

This process is one that has been developed previously in CA. Dudley's discussion of the debt campaign and the position of the ethics officer are only two examples. However, since the disappearance of a theological/ethical position in the

policy team along with the top level staff members who were theological trained, this process has also declined.

In a fully implemented process of action and reflection, CA would be able to draw together the theological threads of staff members, UK supporters, and overseas partners for this fermentation. The beginnings of this process are detailed in the following two chapters, which describe first the analysis of reality and then the analysis of faith. In thinking through these chapters, readers can consider for themselves the steps in the hermeneutic circle. Finally, as for CA, its staff members, churches and partners, they can consider the situation through their hermeneutic circle, their process of self-evaluation, to determine how they will move forward as a community.

## In Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the method of the theological project at CA. CA defines theology as putting faith into action. Christians do theology as they live their daily lives. Churches too are crucial to this theology as they provide CA's mandate for doing theology. Churches own CA; yet they need to be made more aware of this relationship. With this definition of theology, comes a set of expectations. First, this faith is what motivates people to act with CA. Second, this theological reflection should also challenge people's faith. CA itself becomes an example of this theological praxis.

The method of doing theology is one of action and reflection in a spiral. This reflection on the action does occur in diverse CA communities. However, it also has to be encouraged to continue both in CA and in the churches.

One of the problems with the implementation of this method at CA is that not all staff members are aware of this process and its value to CA. It tends to be limited to the C&C department with other individuals participating in events held by that department. CA needs to find a mechanism that will make the process better known and that will integrate the diverse communities' reflection.

A second problem with the implementation of this method is that it is not fully a hermeneutic of suspicion. There should be a critical look at the policy and practice alongside a critical look at scripture or faith. However, that critical reflection on policy and practice is discouraged. The critical look at scripture and faith is also one that needs to be constantly maintained.

To complete the circle, the reflection has to be able to influence further praxis. Such an event cannot occur when that praxis has not been submitted to suspicion. Yet, it does occur on a very informal and implicit level in parts of CA. In addition, there is no mechanism in place to allow reflection to be integrated with this further praxis, although there has been in the past.

Finally, if CA as an organisation considers itself to be between two arms: its partners overseas on the one side and its partners in the UK churches in the other, then there is a piece of the puzzle missing. The partners have no way to integrate their processes of action and reflection with that of CA. Again, there have been mechanisms in place previously.

The following chapters move through the implementation of this method, analysing the policy and theology and exploring the limitations already noted. The second chapter begins by analysing CA's policy on trade and globalisation as it is explained to CA supporters.

## Chapter Two: Reflection on Policy: CA on Globalisation and the Trade Campaign

### Abstract

In this method of action and reflection, there has to be a critical reading of reality and a critical reading of Scripture or spirituality, both in community. This chapter focuses on analysing the reality, which will then be reflected upon theologically. For CA, that reality is a combination of development work and advocacy, based in the International department. The first section details the new trade campaign, CA's current advocacy focus. Then general CA policy on trade and globalisation is considered. For CA, the development paradigm and the phenomenon of globalisation, if managed properly, can be positive. In the workshop settings, staff members began to question this policy, with an emerging alternative, localisation. That understanding of reality is also analysed. From these beginnings, we can then move to a critique of the theological concepts emerging.

To examine the policy seven questions are posed. The first section entitled Trade for Life addresses two of these questions.

1. What are CA's trade campaign objectives?
2. How can CA and its supporters act to achieve these two objectives?

The second section, CA Policy on Trade and the Global Economy, then considers the following three questions.

3. How does CA define development?
4. How does CA define globalisation?
5. What is CA's position on international trade in this context?

The final section, Localisation, discusses two questions surrounding the discussion of alternatives to CA policy.

6. What is the alternative understanding of development and globalisation emerging from the discussions?
7. What is the alternative conception of reality when economic globalisation is not assumed *a priori*?

### An introduction to the settings for reflection on policy and theology

The policy that supports CA's development and advocacy work is reflected upon in several different locations at CA. This chapter focuses on the Campaigns and Global

Advocacy teams, which have responsibility for the policy and its dissemination to UK supporters, encouraging them to act. The Campaigns team is part of the External Relations Department. The campaigns are the public focal point for CA's advocacy work in the UK. They also form a major part of CA's strategic plan on advocacy:

'we will work with our partners and supporters to be part of a global alliance that can and has made a real difference to those who have been made poor, marginalised, denied rights and excluded. ... This commitment will require us to analyse and expose the injustices, and to tackle the root causes of poverty and inequality.' (Christian Aid 2000b, 6)

The challenging of structures requires advocacy, just as theology requires action. CA aims to change the structures that govern everyday life, a macro-level goal to compliment the micro-level development and relief projects funded.

CA's campaign on trade was developed in conjunction with policies created in the Global Advocacy team. Melamed, the Senior Policy Officer for Trade and Globalisation, compiles and disseminates CA policy on trade and globalisation. The team's goal is:

'to serve and inform CA, its teams, departments and other stakeholders by identifying trends, researching, analysing and promoting *agreed* advocacy and policy positions related to the experience and concerns of our partners, our corporate goals and campaigns.' (Christian Aid 2000b, 12)

My italics emphasise the fact that the policy is to be developed as part of the whole organisation. In fact, just as the Adult Christian Education Adviser cannot be solely responsible for the development of theology, neither can the Senior Policy Officers be solely responsible for development of their policies. There is a process of reflection in existence for policy as well as theology, through workshops, forums and other groups, as the SCAC contribution to the choice of campaign showed.

The discussions about the campaign and its policies also extended beyond the International and External Relations departments, as this chapter will detail. To elaborate the policy on trade and globalisation, I cite the CA workshop on God and the Global Economy, set up 'for reflection and discussion on faith and economic justice in an age of globalisation.' (God and the Global Economy, [2000]) While Dudley co-ordinated this particular workshop, previous ones had been set up by the Ethics Officer before her position was cut. The day began with a worship session led by Dudley. Then the Senior Policy Officer on Trade and Globalisation presented on 'globalisation and why it matters.' Held in one of CA's UK regions, the Saturday was a time for reflection

and feedback on both policy and faith. There were more than 50 people present, a mixture of CA staff members from the Church & Community department and local church-related CA supporters.

This event is also the starting point for the theological reflection analysed in the following chapter. That chapter focuses on the second part of the day long conference, Gorrings presentation on 'tools and approaches for doing theology in an age of globalisation.' He also spoke at the national launch of the trade campaign. Gorrings is used, in these cases, in place of a CA staff member when explicit theological discussions take place. His policy implications differ from those of CA staff, as these chapters detail; thus, where they diverge, both views are considered. This divergence was noted by CA staff members at certain points, however, Gorrings continued to present theological reflection to CA supporters and to the general public in the case of the launch of the trade campaign. Because there is no staff elaboration of theology at the God and the Global Economy workshop, the general work of the Churches team, alongside the other forums detailed in the first chapter, is used to round out the analysis. These include the C & C department conference, the Scottish team, the TWG and the TLDG.

Many of the questions posed in this workshop, and in other forums as this chapter details, reflected consideration of an alternative to CA's advocacy of managed globalisation: localisation. Colin Hines, a fellow of the International Forum on Globalization, was invited by the policy team to present a seminar at CA about localisation and trade, which was attended by more than 20 staff members. This presentation touched off a debate on the differences between localisation and CA policy that continues.

## 1. Trade for Life

‘I believe trade should work in the interests of all people. I promise to act with others to change the rules that govern international trade so that they work to eradicate poverty, protect the environment and ensure equal access to life in all its fullness.’ (CA Trade Campaign Pledge)

In the previous chapter, there was a brief discussion of the SCAC’s consideration of the possible campaign topics. For the SCAC members, the consideration of action and faith together was natural. Together, they chose the combination of globalisation and trade from this mixed perspective. A focus on trade alongside globalisation would allow CA to emphasise the need for changing attitudes and lifestyles in the North, not just giving aid to the South. The trade introduction said:

‘Major commercial and political interests have increasing influence over resource use and labour practices in poor countries. ... A vital issue of concern for the poor, and for civil society campaigners worldwide, is the control of and access to food, seeds, water and other productive resources. The challenge is to safeguard food security and trade interests of the south during the WTO negotiations.’ (untitled document)

The campaign would focus on the WTO and TNCs, merging the two issues of trade and globalisation. At the same time, individuals would be able to use their consumer power to ensure the new regulations would be enforced. The Policy team agreed, also recommending to the Campaigns team that a combination of globalisation and trade would be the best choice for a campaign.

The name ‘Trade for Life’ emphasises two characteristics of the campaign. First is that trade can be positive. ‘We believe that the right kind of trade can and must be part of the solution to poverty.’ (Trade for Life [2000], 1) Trade is crucial to poverty reduction. ‘Without trade, people can’t get access to the goods and the income they need to improve their own lives.’ (Melamed and MacMullan<sup>1</sup> 2000, 2) The policy and campaigns teams use evidence from partners around the world to explain this focus.<sup>2</sup> As Mukarji stated in his interview, excerpted in the introduction, developing countries want to be part of the international trading system.

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<sup>1</sup> Justin MacMullan is a Campaigns Officer in the Campaigns team at CA.

<sup>2</sup> This is not true in all cases. Partners like CEAS reject a focus on trade believing it to be outside the remit of bettering the lives of the people in the communities in which they work. Instead, CEAS focuses on empowering the communities to demand from the government provision of basic services, as the fourth chapter explores. In fact, when CEAS received the CA material on the trade campaign (in English), it was mentioned briefly at team leaders’ meeting and then filed.

However, trade is currently unjust. ‘Some people are not able to trade as much as they would like, while others are forced into trading relationships that they don’t benefit from.’<sup>3</sup> (Melamed and MacMullan 2000, 3) Trade is not leading to improved livelihoods because people are not free to choose when, how, and how much to trade. The campaign aims ‘to ensure that trade works in the interests of everyone, not just the few.’ (3) In the situation of just trade, which CA advocates, the poor are not harmed by trade but benefit from it.

From CA’s perspective, trade is the starting point for the process of development. It is important for communities and countries to continue to develop. Both trade and the global trading system are positive concepts for CA. They do not critique the existence of the global market economy, or capitalism, its driving force, or the development paradigm, as others do. They limit their critique to the unjust way that trade occurs today.

The second characteristic emerging from the campaign name is its emphasis on life. It reiterates CA’s traditional focus on life before death, reflecting not only policy but theological undertones as well. This characteristic forms the basis for the theological reflection in the following chapter.

### 1.1 What are CA’s trade campaign objectives?

There are two main objectives for the trade campaign: changing the rules of international trade, decided in the WTO, and regulating the TNCs, the most powerful actors in international trade. Each of these must be analysed in turn to find the assumptions underlying these objectives. These assumptions will then be reflected upon theologically in the following chapter.

Although international trade is often publicised as a situation of free trade, there are rules guiding the process. These rules are created by the interaction of governments in the WTO. This starting point is key for CA’s argument that fairer rules should be introduced.

‘Most global trade is currently subject to international rules agreed by governments through institutions such as the WTO and IMF. These rules benefit the interests of the wealthy, particularly transnational corporations, over those of poor communities and poor countries. Both the rules themselves, and the means by (which) they are negotiated and agreed, need to be

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<sup>3</sup> The negative effects of trade have been addressed by several aid agencies. For example see Madeley 1999.

changed to make trade work in ways that benefit the poor.’  
(Trade for Life [2000], 2)

International trade is not free. The rules in place today prioritise the rich. This situation must be changed to one where the poor are prioritised. This call for a bias toward the poor forms one of the main elements of reflection in the following chapter.

CA’s trade campaign is critical of the current international trade rules, calling them deadly. These deadly rules should be changed to become rules that enhance life. CA focuses on seven rules.<sup>4</sup> (Curtis 2001) Each rule is analysed for the damage it causes and then a solution that enhances life is suggested.

The first deadly rule ensures that poor countries cannot protect their domestic markets from cheap food imported from other countries. Countries in the North can export their excess food production to poorer Southern countries, which have no way to protect their own farmers’ products. Because of this inexpensive imported food, poor countries are unable to build up their own food production to achieve the economic efficiency needed to compete in their own markets and in the international markets.

In changing this rule to emphasise life rather than death, poor countries would be able to protect themselves from imports of food they have the ability to produce on their own. A poor country could ensure that its own farmers are able to develop their production. It would retain control over its own food production rather than being reliant on imports from other countries.

The second deadly rule limits poor country governments’ abilities to regulate their own services. In particular, foreign companies must be allowed to bid to provide national, including formerly public, services.<sup>5</sup>

‘Services’ is a broad term defined as ‘anything that can be bought and sold, but not picked up and carried away- telephone calls, tourism, health care and banking are all examples of services which can be traded between countries.’ (Curtis 2001, 46)

It is possible that this rule will be expanded to services such as health care or education. A country would lose control over how these services are run and by extension so too will the citizens of that country. CEAS, in particular, argues that such services should

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<sup>4</sup> For further details on each of these rules and the changes suggested by CA, see *Trade for Life*. (Curtis 2001)

<sup>5</sup> The current situation in Iraq is one example. Each of its sectors including health care and education have been opened to foreign bidding, reducing the possibility for Iraqis to develop their own ability to provide each.

remain in the control of a democratic government, allowing individuals to participate in the creation of their own society outside the market.

CA's rule for life advocates no mandatory opening up of the service sectors. The choice should remain with the country government. In this way, it could promote its own internal interests first, allowing its own citizens to develop these sectors. CA does not, however, rule out the possibility of opening up service sectors in the future.

The third deadly rule prevents governments from limiting or regulating foreign investment. (Curtis 2001, 52) As with the previous rule, foreign companies have to be allowed to invest in whatever sector they choose. A country is no longer allowed either to put its domestic investors ahead of those from abroad or to work to promote local investment in local businesses.

To enhance life, a country should be able to regulate the level of foreign investment. 'Developing countries need to be able to pursue investment policies that suit their domestic development purposes.' (Curtis 2001, 144) Governments need to be able to put their own economies ahead of other countries' economies, allowing development of domestic investment.

The fourth deadly rule limits the use of agricultural subsidies in poorer countries. The main problem with this rule is that developed countries already have such subsidies in place. Poorer countries, however, cannot introduce subsidies. Thus, richer countries have the advantage in agricultural production. Combined with the first rule that prevents poorer countries from limiting foreign imports of food, these countries are doubly disadvantaged when they try to encourage domestic food production.

CA suggests that this rule be changed to ensure that countries can create national and local food security policies. (Curtis 2001, 144) A country should be in charge of its own food production, which may mean introducing a subsidy or limiting a particular import for a time. Without being able to use such measures, countries will simply not be able to aim for self-sufficiency in food.

The fifth deadly rule contains a similar prohibition against subsidies in industry. Thus, the same inequality exists in industry as in agriculture. Rich countries are required to reduce their existing industrial subsidies but these subsidies have already helped to make their industries competitive in domestic and international markets. (Curtis 2001, 60) Poorer countries, in contrast, cannot introduce them. Thus, there is no way for poorer countries to protect their own developing industries.

CA advocates a similar change to this rule, allowing poorer countries to control their own industrial policies. Part of this control has to be the possibility of using

subsidies and other regulation to limit imports and foreign investment. A country should be able to aim for internal industrial production instead of becoming dependent on imports.

The sixth deadly rule prohibits exports from these poorer countries to the North. Northern countries have retained bans on the importation of certain goods to benefit their economies. In contrast, the countries in the South have to allow imports. In fact, poorer countries often have to reduce their prohibitions on imports as a prerequisite for finance and funding from the World Bank and the IMF.

To change this to a rule for life, poorer countries have to be able to access rich country markets when they become ready to export. 'Rich countries need to remove the unfair protection against imports from the poorer countries.' (Curtis 2001, 145) As richer countries argue that prohibitions by the poorer countries on imports are unfair, then so too must their prohibitions be unfair.

Finally, the last deadly rule allows businesses to own knowledge and natural resources. This rule particularly benefits the North because it is mainly companies based in the Northern countries that are applying for the patents that would give them ownership of these products. For example, one plant grown only in the Amazon actually belongs to a US pharmaceutical company. The Amazon region now has no control over its production. One Chinese plant, thought to be of use in HIV treatment, is owned by New York University. Any future profits will accrue on US soil, although the plant is native to another country.

As with the other rule changes, to enhance life, countries should retain sovereignty over their own resources. There should be safeguards against both biopiracy and patenting. 'Developing countries need to be able to secure easy access to essential drugs and technology and ensure that companies, including TNCs, are not able to monopolise natural resources for private profit.' (Curtis 2001, 146) Rich countries and companies cannot be allowed to exploit poorer countries.

In all of these rules, CA rejects the prioritisation of richer countries over poorer ones. In contrast, it has an overt bias toward the poor. CA suggests that the WTO should also have this bias, as it is through the WTO that the rules of trade are defined. The WTO should aim to attain the International Development targets that also prioritise the poor. These targets are:

1. A reduction by half in the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015;
2. Universal primary education in all countries by 2015;

3. Gender disparities in primary and secondary education removed by 2005;
4. A reduction by two-thirds in the mortality rates for infants and children under 5 and a reduction by three-quarters in maternal mortality by 2015;
5. Access through the primary health care system to reproductive health services for all individuals of appropriate ages as soon as possible and no later than 2015;
6. Implementation of national strategies for sustainable development in all countries by 2005, so as to ensure that current trends in the loss of environmental resources are effectively reversed at both global and national levels by 2015.<sup>6</sup>

The final target emphasises the priority that CA too placed on developing countries retaining sovereignty over their own development processes. The WTO should become part of this struggle.

While the WTO is the place where these rules are agreed, it is not the only international organisation to enforce the rules. The IMF, the World Bank and the UK government are all campaign targets because of their ability to influence the rule-making. The World Bank and the IMF currently impose conditions on their loans and grants to developing countries, which require these countries to follow WTO rules. Instead of being forced to follow the deadly rules, countries should be encouraged by the World Bank and the IMF to draw up their own development strategies.

The UK government too supports these deadly trade rules. It should instead work toward prioritising the world's poor. With this change in its own agenda, the UK could begin to influence the EU, as the EU represents the UK in WTO negotiations. The UK government could then aim to influence other organisations like the World Bank, WTO and IMF.

CA is particularly concerned that countries retain sovereignty over their citizens, markets and resources. Its focus on country sovereignty makes one crucial assumption: that each country will have a successfully functioning democratic government. CEAS, in contrast, does not make this assumption. From its own experience its government is not yet functioning as an inclusive democracy. Thus, CEAS retains a focus on ensuring the Brazilian government becomes responsive to its citizens. Where CA emphasises trade rather than citizenship, citizenship is central to CEAS.

The participants in the God and the Global Economy workshop were concerned with a different aspect of country governments, that of the openness of governments in

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<sup>6</sup> For further information on any of these targets see [www.dfid.gov.uk](http://www.dfid.gov.uk).

the face of public opposition. One participant asked Melamed, the Senior Policy Officer for Trade and Globalisation, if the WTO might become more secretive in its actions due to the increased public protests. She answered that further secrecy was a possibility. The WTO only has power because governments and companies participate in it. There is a possibility that the powerful players could withdraw and make bilateral deals. In fact, the USA appears to be suggesting just this after the failure of the recent WTO talks in Mexico. Because of this potential, there needs to be a two-pronged approach, according to Melamed and the Campaigns team. While the first prong focuses on the international trade rules, the second prong will focus on the source of the problems: the companies that actually do the trading.

Limiting the power of TNCs is crucial to retaining a nation's sovereignty. TNCs, alongside the WTO, IMF, etc., are structures that can either contribute to poverty or work to eradicate it. CA's second campaign objective is to regulate these TNCs.

'Although trade rules are agreed between governments, TNCs are the main agents of trade in practice (in terms of the total value of trade). These companies operate across national boundaries and their wealth, size and number give them enormous power, in both rich and poor countries. Their activities can benefit poor communities, for example by providing jobs. But TNCs can also exploit or ignore the needs of poor people. Effective regulation, greater corporate responsibility and accountability through open and democratic structures are needed to ensure that TNCs make a positive contribution to poor people and poor countries on whom their activities impact.' (Trade for Life [2000], 2)

TNCs too can and should have a bias toward the poor. Currently, there is little accountability and thus no way to ensure that TNCs prioritise the poor.

People are not citizens of corporations. In a democratic country, if the government has control over a particular industry or aspect of trade, any person could have a voice in the decision-making through the voting process. In contrast, people's roles as decision-makers in companies are limited to those of consumer or shareholder. Both of these roles depend on access to money.

CA aims to introduce a measure of democracy into TNCs through international regulation. 'All TNCs should be required to abide by a set of international minimum standards.' (Drewry<sup>7</sup>, MacMullan and Bentall 2002, 22) These minimum standards

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<sup>7</sup> Martin Drewry is head of the Campaigns team at CA.

could be enforced by a global regulatory authority (GRA).<sup>8</sup> This GRA would not regulate the TNCs itself but would provide a framework within which governments could create and sustain the legislation, similar to the WTO. It could be created within one of the existing UN agencies.

Such an organisation would aim for poverty eradication. The GRA would ‘establish a code of conduct, that all large TNCs and their affiliates must abide by, with individual governments endorsing and enforcing the code.’ (Drewry, MacMullan and Bentall 2002, 23) The code would include regulation on human rights, the environment and working conditions. A GRA would also be able to enforce this code through the courts, nationally and internationally. Although citizens would still not be able to participate directly in the companies without access to money, it would at least encourage countries to exercise more control over the multinational companies. It would return to the country governments another measure of sovereignty over the process of development, ensuring people could participate through the process of democracy. This, of course, depends on whether the national government allows democratic participation.

By arguing that TNCs should be subject to regulation, CA emphasises that the TNCs in and of themselves are not inevitably harmful to the poor. Rather, they too could prioritise the poor. In contrast, those practitioners who support localisation, as an alternative to international trade, argue that it is impossible for TNCs to benefit the poor, due to their size, scale, and the fact that they are so distant from both the producers and the consumers. Theologically, the discussion centres on whether the structures themselves are sinful because of their focus on profit, and if so whether and how they can be redeemed, as the following chapter explores.

## 1.2 How can CA and its supporters act to achieve these two objectives?

The most direct form of action that CA supporters can take to meet these two objectives is through their economic power as consumers. The ‘campaign will encourage people to use their own consumer power (individually or through churches or other organisations) to support trade which benefits poor people.’ (Trade for Life [2000], 2) This element of direct action has formed the basis for previous campaigns. For example, during the Fair Trade campaign, CA campaigners collected their supermarket till receipts over several months and presented them to store managers in groups,

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<sup>8</sup> This is only one suggestion within a wide range of techniques that practitioners and activists suggest to control TNCs. For a history of this process see Richter 2001.

emphasising that they would be happy to spend their money in any supermarket that stocked fairly traded goods and signed up to the Ethical Trading Initiative.<sup>9</sup>

Consumer pressure is successful when the names of companies are actually publicised. The companies need consumers to buy their products and invest in them. Thus, companies are concerned that their brand names remain spotless and that they not be associated with issues such as child labour. When these issues become important to consumers, they have to become important to the companies too. It is also possible that people who work in and with multinational corporations can pressure these companies directly to become involved in the creation of an international regulatory body.

This consumer pressure will also be important when the changes have been made to the international trade rules and when the TNC regulation exists. Then consumers can use their buying and investment powers to ensure that the regulations are not broken. These powers extend to churches and other communities who can influence companies through ethical investment funds and other mechanisms.

On its own, this strategy of using consumer power is not enough. Apart from the fact that consumers can only influence multinational corporations through not buying their products, they have no power to influence the WTO. In addition, the names of the most powerful companies are not widely known; only the names of their smaller subsidiaries are publicly advertised. This anonymity of the TNCs, combined with their lack of accountability, gives them strength.

Apart from their economic power, people in the UK also hold political power. They have to exercise this power to ensure that the UK government represents their views at an international level, struggling for the changes to international trade rules and TNC regulation. Individuals and communities in the UK cannot influence the WTO, the World Bank, and the IMF on their own. The UK represents its citizens at these organisations. Thus, MPs, MSPs, and MEPs<sup>10</sup> are active targets for the campaigners.

The first means of influencing the government and other organisations is through signing the campaign pledge, quoted at the beginning of this section. By signing the pledge, communities commit themselves to campaigning for the changes. By sending the signed pledges to the MPs, MSPs and MEPs, they emphasise how many people are convinced of the need for changes to the international trade rules and for TNC regulation. Other means of influencing the government are to be developed during the

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<sup>9</sup> See CA 1999b for further details of this successful practical action.

<sup>10</sup> An MP is a Member of Parliament, an MSP is a Member of the Scottish Parliament, and an MEP is a Member of the European Parliament.

course of the campaign. Such means focus on actions by constituents to convince their representatives to adopt the trade campaign objectives.

This political aspect reflects Mukarji's comment that CA has to use its political power for advocacy. CA's political influence on structures like the WTO and the UK government comes from this supporter action. CA also draws on the fact that the policy reflection integrates UK churches and overseas partners. While on their own they may not be able to change the situation, they aim to build an alliance through the Trade Justice Movement<sup>11</sup> that will work to change the UK government first. Then with the UK government, these organisations can pressure the World Bank, IMF, the WTO, and other governments to change the rules of the WTO and regulate the TNCs. This aspect of exercising citizenship is absent from the theological reflection but is central to CEAS as the fourth chapter shows.

Mukarji also stated that CA has moral power. This moral power stems from the faith of its supporters. The following chapter will question how the theological discussions in the hermeneutic circle can lead to the moral underpinnings that others, including the former Secretary of State for International Development, assume exist in CA policy.

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<sup>11</sup> See [www.tradejusticemovement.org.uk](http://www.tradejusticemovement.org.uk).

## 2. CA Policy on Trade and the Global Economy

CA's trade campaign aims to regulate TNCs and set rules on international trade that prioritise the poor. These goals will be achieved through the actions of people in the North, using their political and economic power to influence governments and TNCs. This campaign is based on CA policy. To understand the process of reflection with regard to the campaign, it is also important to understand the wider process of reflection on CA policy. This section examines CA's understanding of development, globalisation, and trade, which influenced the development of the campaign.

### 2.1 How does CA define development?

'What I mean by development is a dual process of growth and poverty reduction.' (Melamed 2002b)

CA is an organisation that works within the context of development. Yet, development is not defined by CA as it occurs but as it is hoped to occur. In reality, as Rist stated, the practice of development tends to destroy both the environment and communities with its focus on economic growth. What then is CA's understanding of the term?

The CA supporters interviewed for this research did not differentiate between development and post-development. Instead, they distinguished between the concepts of charity and justice when they described their understanding of CA's development practice. As the following chapter explores, they made a similar distinction between CA's underlying theology and that of other faith-based agencies. The majority of those interviewed saw CA's development work as a struggle for justice.

This struggle was not limited to alleviating the suffering of those in the South, which would be charity. Instead, working toward justice requires change on the part of the North as well. 'There are things that people in the North can do... I'm particularly thinking about drug companies that are keeping prices artificially high and are not allowing cheaper copies of drugs to be made.' (Interview 6, 2000) Justice includes the need for people in the North to change their own lifestyles. Collecting money for partners overseas is only part of CA's mandate. There should also be an active commitment on the part of supporters in the North to live justly and to campaign for justice.

How then are development and the struggle for justice defined? The following chapter addresses the theological element of this question. Mukarji said that CA works

to 'expose the scandal of poverty,' 'contribute to the eradication of poverty by the partners' and to 'challenge the structures and systems.' Is each of these elements part of the process of development?

The Senior Policy Officer on Trade and Globalisation defined development as a dual process of economic growth and poverty reduction.<sup>12</sup> This definition places CA firmly into the context of development rather than with the group of critics coalescing around post-development. Those working in post-development argue that development does not contribute to poverty reduction. In addition, they reject the idea that the rest of the world should be focusing on economic growth to achieve the 'developed' country level of consumption.

CA accepts economic growth as part of development. Many post-development practitioners and theorists not only reject a focus on growth, they also reject the focus on economics. For CA, trading relationships are crucial for economic growth and thus trade becomes a focus. The trade campaign does not question the focus on growth in today's global economic system.

This economic growth is not enough on its own, however, for CA. It has to be accompanied by poverty reduction. Both development and post-development practitioners agree that poverty reduction is a crucial goal. CA prioritises the poor and urges the WTO, IMF, TNCs, and other structures to do the same. In this way, its advocacy of structural change matches its support of partner attempts to eradicate poverty. CA's definition of development, then, underlies both its funding of partner organisations overseas and its advocacy strategy.

By accepting the dual process of poverty reduction and economic growth, CA places itself in the mainstream of development theory and practice. The World Bank World Development Report (WDR) also emphasises the importance of economic growth with poverty reduction. It defines poverty as 'encompassing not only low income and consumption but also low achievement in education, health, nutrition, and other areas of human development.' (World Bank 2001, v) This definition assumes that poverty is experienced in the same way by everyone regardless of cultural or other differences. While it expands the definition beyond consumption and the economic realm, this aspect still tends to be the focus. The World Bank views poverty as the result of three factors: lack of income and assets, voicelessness and powerlessness, and vulnerability.

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<sup>12</sup> Not all those working in the field of development agree. For example, one study shows that a focus on human development, a wide measure of improvement including education, health, etc., leads to growth but the opposite is not true. Thus, even if growth is accepted, some argue it has to be a secondary focus. (Ranis, Steward and Ramirez 2000)

Opportunity, empowerment and security will counter poverty. These solutions focus on economic growth. While empowerment also focuses on making states more responsive to their citizens, the World Bank is taking control away from governments by allocating more aspects of daily life to the private sector. CEAS argues against this move toward privatisation, the moving of public sector services into the economic realm.

This perception of poverty as related to the global economy is new. 'For long, and in many cultures of the world, poor was not always the opposite of rich.' (Rahnema<sup>13</sup> 1992, 158) Poverty has previously been defined in relation to others in community and not just in terms of money. CEAS still discusses poverty in terms of anyone excluded from community. Its particular focus is on the political community to which all should have equal access.

However, poverty has now become a concept with one global definition. 'The basic materials which have gone into the construct are essentially the economization of life and the forceful integration of vernacular societies into the world economy.' (Rahnema 1992, 161) All aspects of life are subsumed in an economic discussion. The economy defines whether one is poor or rich. Similarly, this understanding of poverty as directly related to the economy has been integrated into nearly every society.

This global conception of poverty rests on two main assumptions. First, 'the poor are assumed to be 'underdeveloped' and –momentarily at least- deprived of their capacity to define their own interests.' (Rahnema 1992, 163) They need assistance from others to bring them out of poverty. Second, there is an assumption that every culture shares 'a common belief- that economic growth and prosperity was a *sine qua non* for coming out of poverty.' (163) This is why development links economic growth and poverty eradication.

Poverty, in this view, can be measured and dealt with from a technical perspective. 'The advent of a world economy, with all its realities and accompanying myths (the existence of unlimited resources, technological miracles, endless consumer goods, induced needs, etc.) created a set of universal referents.' (Rahnema 1992, 162) Anywhere around the globe, there can be a similar conception of poverty. Because there is one definition, then there can be one answer to poverty.

Introducing this new measure of poverty into the global setting has changed the understanding of poverty in four ways.

- First, 'the materialities' have changed. (Rahnema 1992, 159) The global economy now is based on consumption. The possibilities in the material

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<sup>13</sup> Majid Rahnema is an Iranian development practitioner and professor.

realm are endless. Thus, there is a perception of a much greater lack on the part of the poor.

- Second, poverty depends on ‘the subject’s own perception of his (sic) condition.’ (160) Where once poverty was understood in relation to one’s local neighbour, there is information available to people on how others live around the world.
- Third, and relatedly, is ‘how the others view the poor.’ (160) When people are treated as poor by those around them, their own perception of their situation may then change.
- Finally, this emergence of the Western economy into a global phenomenon provides an example of ‘socio-cultural space-times affecting various perceptions of poverty.’ (161) Where a local community may once have viewed themselves as well-off, in comparison to the global consumer culture the definition may change to one of poverty.

CA’s understanding of the practice of development in response to poverty differs from that of the World Bank in two crucial ways. First, the WDR does not question whether growth is enough. ‘Traditional elements of strategies to foster economic growth- macroeconomic stability and market-friendly reforms- are essential for reducing poverty.’<sup>14</sup> (World Bank 2001, vi) CA, while accepting growth as an important factor, acknowledges that growth alone is not enough to achieve development. CA also advocates regulation of the markets to ensure they are working to reduce poverty. Further, the WDR completely ignores the need to regulate the multinational corporations, one of CA’s foci.

Second, in regulating international trade, the WDR focuses on the importance of exporting goods, where CA focuses on the ability of countries to develop their own internal markets before exportation begins. Where both are concerned with economic growth, they approach the concern in different ways. The WDR advocates ‘expanding market access in rich countries for developing countries’ goods and services.’ (World Bank 2001, 179) CA agrees with this goal, however, they want measures to ensure greater in-country production of goods and fairer international trade first. Where the WDR assumes that growth will lead to poverty reduction, CA is more cautious in its approach.

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<sup>14</sup> This document and its focus on poverty caused many arguments within the World Bank between those who put free markets above all else and those who are more qualified in their approval. See Wade 2001.

Development and post-development both have poverty reduction, in its economic sense, as a goal. Critics of development argue that while poverty reduction is on the development wish list, it does not occur on the ground. Because of this, the process of development should be rejected. While CA remains within the mainstream of development practice, it aims to ensure that economic growth reduces poverty.

One aspect missing from the definition of poverty is the concept of citizenship. Yet, in order for economic growth to reduce poverty, in CA's view, individual country governments have to be able to organise national strategies for development. This organisation rests on an assumption of effective democratic governments, a concept not considered in this context but central to CEAS.

## 2.2 How does CA define globalisation?

'Globalisation is a process of increasing interconnectedness of individuals, groups, companies and countries.' ...

'Some form of globalisation is a given. But globalisation is not the same as the weather - it can be managed. As the Secretary of State for International Development has repeatedly pointed out, globalisation has been designed by people, and can be reformed by people. The important question is how can it be made to work most effectively for poor people?' (Green and Melamed 2000, 1)

CA situates its discussion of development in the larger context of globalisation. This process of globalisation is irreversible. Thus, it has to be dealt with; it cannot be ignored or rejected. CA argues that the benefits of globalisation need to be distributed amongst the poor. Globalisation should be adapted to people's needs rather than needs being adapted to fit in with globalisation. Globalisation can be positive as long as it is properly controlled. What is globalisation?

Globalisation is a term used in myriad ways. The verb 'to globalise' means 'to make global' or 'to make worldwide in scope or application.'<sup>15</sup> Globalisation is a noun, which means the making global of something. Instead, it is more commonly used alone to describe a process, which hides what it is that is being made global. If used properly it would be linked with the word 'of,' for example, the globalisation of the capitalist economy.

CA emphasises the 'technological, economic, and political' interconnectedness that results from the globalisation of various phenomena. (Green and Melamed 2000, 1)

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<sup>15</sup> [www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com).

During most of the discussions, however, the focus was on the economic aspect, as is the case with the trade campaign. The political realm is discussed where that realm interacts with the economy. Those who criticise globalisation tend to be critical both of the economic aspect and of the lack of focus on the political realm. CEAS, for example, is critical of neoliberal capitalism, the economic system that is becoming globalised. CA does not tend to use the word capitalism to describe what is becoming global. Instead, it uses the term economic globalisation without specifying what it is within economics that is being spread globally.

The upsurge in economic interconnectedness has two characteristics, according to CA. First, there has been an increase in the speed of economic activity. Money now moves around the world with the touch of a computer key. International financial flows, for example, have grown to £2 trillion per day.<sup>16</sup>

Second, there has been an increase in the scale of the economic activity. TNCs 'account for about a third of world output and two-thirds of world trade.' (Green and Melamed 2000, 15) The companies that exchange the goods and money are much larger than previously. Further, 'around a third of world trade takes place within transnationals, between subsidiaries of the same corporation based in different countries.' (15) These multinational companies have gained a lot of control over international trade. This combination of increased speed and scale means that trade flows are fifteen times what they were at the end of World War II.

Due to the increased speed and scale of economic activity there is less individual country control over events. For example, the crash of the Japanese economy in 1998 affected the Scottish whisky industry because Japan previously imported a lot of Scottish whisky. Similarly affected was the Bolivian trade in Brazil nuts. The European Union (EU) imposed health and safety standards on the importation of Brazil nuts. Although Bolivia considers these regulations to be unfair it cannot export to the EU because it cannot meet the standards. The people on the ground who pick the Brazil nuts can do nothing to change the situation.

The economic situation cannot be discussed without regard to its impact on the political situation. With the globalisation of this economic activity, the level of discussion has been raised from national to international through the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank. National governments converse with each other in these organisations,

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<sup>16</sup> CA focuses on trade rather than finance. For further information on international money flows see Singh 2000 and for a specific suggestion of how to harness these flows see Patomaki 2001.

creating further interconnectedness. Individual countries seem to be losing power in this situation.

‘The growing global market means that governments’ control over economic matters has decreased. The power of the IMF, large transnational corporations and overseas investors is such that it is increasingly difficult for poor nations to make their own choices.’ (Lockwood and Madden<sup>17</sup> 1997, 25)

As CA argued with its proposed changes to the trade rules, countries no longer have control over their own economies.

This economic globalisation also exacerbates the gap between the rich and the poor. ‘Some governments have allowed inequality between individuals to rise sharply, so that some people enjoyed new wealth while others remain mired in poverty.’ (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 26) This inequality is both within and between countries.

The decision to reduce inequality does not rest with governments alone, though, as they have less control over their own economies. ‘Global market integration is racing ahead of political and social accountability.’ (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 4) The focus on economics means that the linkages are being forgotten. ‘Politics needs to catch up with the market, and people need to have control over economic change.’ (4) While basing the discussion on the economic setting, CA acknowledges that political elements are crucial too. The example of CEAS contributes further to this discussion.

This situation of economic globalisation has had impacts beyond the economic and political realms, exacerbating cultural and social tensions too. ‘The growth of global markets has also sharpened regional disparities, or inequalities between groups. Under these conditions, existing tensions can explode into wars, often on ethnic or communitarian lines.’ (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 26) Situations of inequality can pit one group of citizens against another either within or between countries and other groupings. The fourth chapter explores this aspect with the example of a police strike in the city of Salvador.

In the face of the negative impacts of loss of control, greater inequality and increased cultural tensions, CA policy advocates a situation of managed globalisation. The globalisation of the capitalist economy does not need to be rejected but it does need to be reformed. DfID makes a similar argument, although their suggestions for the management of the global economy differ to those of CA. DfID policy, for example, assumes that globalisation benefits the poor as long as governments are effective and markets are efficient. It does not, however, ensure that this outcome results from its

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<sup>17</sup> Matthew Lockwood and Peter Madden were both CA staff members.

policies. It also assumes that the liberalisation of trade and finance, characteristics of neoliberal capitalism, will solve the problems associated with economic globalisation. For DfID, it is the implementation of the policy rather than the policy itself that is causing the current problems.

Where DfID is unequivocal in its support of trade liberalisation, CA will consider any economic policy that will achieve poverty reduction. 'It is likely that no single prescription would be followed, but that it would be appropriate to liberalise in some sectors while temporarily protecting others, and to use a range of other instruments to enable poor people to gain from reforms.' (Green and Melamed 2000, 30) CA accepts that economic globalisation, liberalisation and trade restrictions could all be options for reducing poverty.

For example, CA argues that there is a need for redistribution and equity within and between countries before effective governments and efficient markets can reduce poverty. 'Recent evidence from the World Bank shows that improved equity not only leads to faster poverty reduction for a given amount of growth, but also leads to faster growth.' (Green and Melamed 2000, 1) CA supports redistribution because it will lead to both poverty reduction and economic growth. DfID, in contrast, argues that 'global inequality is falling anyway.' (Melamed 2001, 4) For DfID, it is up to governments to work with their poorer communities to achieve this equity and, in addition, the process of economic globalisation is already leading to increased equity.

Finally, CA does not trust that multinational companies will implement poverty reduction strategies on their own. DfID, on the other hand, trusts the private sector to carry out their policies on trade in the interests of the poor, through self-regulation. Nowhere does DfID mention a global regulatory authority, a centrepiece of CA's analysis of trade and globalisation.

Thus, when discussing economic globalisation, although CA accepts the importance of growth, it aims to ensure that any policy to achieve growth will also reduce poverty. 'Clearly, growth matters.' (Green and Melamed 2000, 1) However, the benefits of economic growth have to accrue to the poor. 'What needs to be the focus of attention is the way that growth is achieved and who benefits.' (2) The two are not separate considerations. The question of citizenship and effective governments is, however, considered separately.

## 2.3 What is CA's position on international trade in this context?

‘Trading relationships are now shaped by the technological, political, and economic changes that together are called ‘globalisation.’ (Melamed and MacMullan 2000, 3)

CA's understanding of trade revolves around the twin powers of the WTO and the TNCs. Just as it has a positive conception of trade, it also believes that both the WTO and TNCs can work toward poverty reduction. The TNCs and the WTO do not yet have this aim, which is why there is a need for the trade campaign. CA has two goals for trade:

1. trade should make ‘economies grow’; (Curtis 2001, 21)
2. trade should ‘reduce poverty’; (22)

To meet this second goal, trade should have ‘safeguards to protect poor people’; (23) and poor people should have a ‘central role in policy making.’ (25) Setting international trade into the context of development, CA restates its acceptance of the importance of economic growth alongside poverty reduction. In order to reduce poverty, both the WTO and TNCs have to allow poor people to make the decisions.

The history of international trade helps to contextualise the current situation, as the size and scale of trade have been increasing for some time leaving pockets of previous phases in regions around the world.

- The first major phase of trade had ‘a mercantile division of labour’ where ‘a surplus of commodities was generated through the accidents of geography, climate, and the spread of plants and animals.’ (Hines 2000, 9) Trade remained primarily local.
- ‘The second phase came with the industrial division of labour’ where ‘machines began to replace the production and processing of tropical commodities.’ (9) Production speeded up and international trade began to increase.
- Next was the ‘imperial division of labour’ where ‘money from the home countries moved to other colonies where sufficient profits were produced to fund modest improvements for workers at home.’ (9) Profits generated in the colonies were extracted and returned to the colonising countries.
- ‘The world is now entering a fourth phase,’ the transnational division of labour, ‘where power has centred on the US’ and on TNCs. (9) Here, the profit tends to remain in companies bypassing governments altogether.

The introduction of each new phase does not mean that the older phase disappears. There are still examples of each of the previous three around the world, which

complicates the discussion of international trade. In addition, not all regions within particular countries have similar experiences of trade, as the Brazilian example shows.

Currently, the WTO governs trade and its rules favour the rich countries, as Melamed explained to the workshop participants. While the trade campaign focuses on particular trade rules, CA policy also emphasises the actual decision-making process of the WTO. These rules entrench the benefits to the rich countries because it is these countries that have the power to set the rules. While advocating neoliberal capitalist theories, which argue that trade must be free, the countries' actions are to protect their own economies in direct opposition to these theories. The situation is political as well as economic in that it is mainly the USA and the EU that achieve their desired outcomes.

Further, free trade does not equal fair trade. Trade liberalisation is seen to be the answer in neoliberal policies. However, 'increasingly, researchers are concluding that there may be no single, identifiable relationship between particular trade policies and economic growth.' (Green and Melamed 2000, 15) Even in the long term the results are still ambiguous.<sup>18</sup> 'For growth to have the maximum impact on poverty, it has to occur in the sectors where people earn their livelihoods.' (17) Free trade does not accomplish this. In fact, the clearest examples come from the USA and the EU, which protect their own economic sectors while trying to open those of other countries.

The benefits to the rich countries are further exaggerated when the unequal starting points of countries are taken into consideration. There are regions still experiencing each of the three previous phases of trade. If one country is richer than another or has a better developed industrial sector, then this country has an advantage to begin with and the result of free trade is that not every country will benefit equally. Instead, inequality increases further. Melamed, in her presentation to the God and the Global Economy workshop, stated that the richest three people in the world have more money than the poorest 600 million. The global trading system generates benefits for some but only at the expense of the majority who remain poor.

In theory, each country participating in the WTO has one vote in the decision-making process. However, in practice, not all countries can exercise their vote equally. At this workshop, Melamed related the story of a WTO delegate who is the only representative for her/his country. This person is responsible for the approximately 1,000 meetings that occur in the WTO each year. The subjects dealt with range from agriculture through air transport legislation to the definition of a particular tariff. Not only does the one person need to be able to understand every topic but s/he is also to

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<sup>18</sup> See Greenaway, Morgan and Wright 2002.

influence decision-making to the benefit of the home country. This person said her/his impact on the decisions over the past few years could be summed up in two lines or less of text.

Several delegates confirmed this feeling of hopelessness in conversations with Melamed. They try to achieve benefits for their own countries but it is impossible. There are 25 to 30 countries that cannot even afford to have one delegate in Geneva, the headquarters of the WTO. There are a further 30 countries who have between one and three representatives. In contrast, the UK, represented by the EU, has five and a half of its own delegates in Geneva along with the 15 to 20 EU delegates. The most crucial difference is that the Northern countries can afford to fly in experts when they need to address a particular technical issue.

Some countries are excluded from the process altogether while others are being driven out. The EU previously gave preference to Caribbean banana companies but the EU was challenged by the USA in what became a serious dispute. Without the EU bias toward these Caribbean companies they will be pushed out by the large American ones. Thus, as one WTO delegate said to Melamed, in a few years there will be a level playing field but there will be no one left to play on it.

However, criticising the WTO alone will not solve the problem. The WTO is only a forum for negotiation between governments and it is the relationship between the governments and the companies that is crucial. These relationships can be very close. For example, one of the grain companies based in the USA wrote the first draft of the US position on grain for a WTO meeting.

When Melamed said that half of the 100 largest economic units in the world are not countries but companies at the God and the Global Economy workshop, there were many sharp intakes of breath around the room. The majority of the participants had not been aware that the fifty largest companies in the world are larger than the majority of countries. This statistic re-emphasises the loss of control of individual nations in the current global situation. This lack of ability to control companies connects to the democratic process and is one reason why CEAS has chosen not to focus on trade as an issue. A democratic government has to be able to control the units governing individual lives. People have the option of participating in a democratic government but do not have the same voting rights in companies unless they have access to money.

These multinational companies often have negative impacts on the poor and on the local areas in the South where aspects of their business are located.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> See Curtis 2001, 117-119 for further details on each of these negative effects.

- At a local level, a TNC can shut out existing local businesses with its ability to bring better technology and other resources in from abroad.
- Second, they may invest in an area because wages are low and benefits do not exist. Instead of paying better wages they can stay at the low rate. They can then leave the area when the situation begins to change. Combined with the closing of local businesses, people are then left without employment altogether.
- Third, TNCs can have detrimental effects on the environment as they often invest in countries where environmental legislation is lax or non-existent.
- Fourth, they can threaten local livelihoods by taking over land used by local people, in addition to undermining the local businesses.
- Fifth, they can violate human rights. There have been cases where people who protested against the entrance of TNCs have been killed. In addition, TNCs can invest in violent and/or undemocratic government regimes ensuring their survival.

These negative effects occur because TNCs are unaccountable to all but their investors. The residents of the areas in which they are located have no control over them. TNCs can also influence the national governments of the poorer countries by offering their investment in exchange for inaction on labour exploitation and environmental degradation. In this way, the process of democracy in these countries is threatened. Further, the TNCs form links with northern governments providing themselves with another layer of protection. They are known to be contributors to political campaigns in northern countries, which also undermines the democracies of these northern countries. Finally, their profits tend to return to the northern countries where they are based, draining Southern country resources further.

CA policy is specific on how the WTO and TNCs can turn their negative effects on the poor into positive ones. While agreeing with the campaign's calls for changes to the international trade rules and the call for TNC regulation, the policy argues that more change is necessary. The WTO's decision-making process has to favour the poorer nations. CA does not want the WTO to disappear. It is a positive forum for international decision-making if all countries can be treated equitably. 'Rule-making must proceed at a pace that is appropriate for the weakest members of the system, and the rules made in the WTO must be the right rules for poverty reduction.' (Green and Melamed 2000, 4) The rules have to be focused on poverty alleviation but in order to achieve these fairer rules the countries have to be able to participate equally in the process.

The focus remains on returning to each country control over its own trading future. 'The agenda for any genuine 'development round' of global trade talks should be

based on the concerns of developing countries, such as implementation and anti-dumping issues.’ (Green and Melamed 2000, 4) When the poorer countries are able to represent their own interests the changes to the rules will follow, an argument which rests on the assumption of effective democratic governments. The recent phase of the trade talks in Mexico showed that some of the less developed countries are trying to work together to demand certain changes. A group of 21 countries led by Brazil and China opposed the USA and EU causing an impasse because they refused to make any changes before the USA and the EU ended their own trading restrictions.

Before a further round of trade talks occurs, the WTO should provide an analysis of the previous trade rounds.<sup>20</sup> ‘This should examine the distribution of gains and losses between poor people and rich, large and small firms and developing and developed countries.’ (Green and Melamed 2000, 45) With this information, countries could work out where they stand in the process. In this way, if there were to be a grace period between trade rounds, the WTO could still be active. It could also take the lead in developing poorer countries’ capacity to participate in the process of international trade negotiation.

CA also emphasises that it is crucial for the UK government to change its own policies on international trade before taking the lead in influencing the WTO to change. ‘The UK’s trade with developing countries is worth around 300 billion pounds per year—over 100 times the value of UK government aid.’ (Green and Melamed 2000, 38) For CA, if UK trade policy aimed for poverty eradication that would be far more effective than UK aid for development. CA targets the Export Credit Guarantee Department in particular, which ‘should include a commitment to poverty reduction and sustainable development, including respect for the environment and human rights, in its business mandate.’ (4) Policy change is firmly placed in the North too, not only limited to the DfID but extending to other UK government departments.

Once the UK has put its own trade policy in order, it can influence the EU and through the EU the WTO. It can pressure the EU to ‘grant duty-free access to all (*not* ‘essentially all’) goods from least developed countries.’ (Green and Melamed 2000, 4) It can then exert similar pressure on the WTO.

As with the trade campaign, CA policy also emphasises the regulation of TNCs because with this regulation TNCs can benefit the poor. It is not the structure itself that

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<sup>20</sup> For further information on the Uruguay Round, the North American Free Trade Agreement, and Mercosur see Griesgraber and Gunder 1997. For a criticism of these agreements see Nader and Wallach 1996.

is the problem but the fact that it is not oriented toward the poor. Such a change would have a much larger impact than increasing aid for development projects. TNCs can

- introduce ‘new technologies and processes’ to a certain area, which would otherwise not be available; (Curtis 2001, 109)
- introduce specialisation, which could lead to exportation of goods;
- ‘help to stimulate the expansion of competitive domestic production,’ helping local areas to have better quality products; (110) and
- offer ‘research and development,’ higher salaries, more jobs, more money in general and higher labour and environmental standards. (110)

However, this regulation has to be set in the context of wider international changes. Alongside the changes to the international trade rules, TNCs focusing on poverty reduction could make trading beneficial to the poorer countries and to poorer communities within each country.

International trade is not inherently positive, according to CA, but it can become positive. ‘Trade and investment are means to an end, not ends in themselves.’ (Green and Melamed 2000, 8) The end is development, that dual process of economic growth and poverty reduction. ‘The critical factor in judging the relative merits of different policies is by assessing their impact on human development. This point may seem obvious, but it is often lost in the debates.’ (8) If growth and poverty reduction are not achieved by the changes, then perhaps those changes will have to be rethought. ‘There is no *a priori* merit to either open or restrictive trade or investment regimes. Both are merely economic approaches which, in practice, benefit some and harm others.’ (8) Decisions regarding trade depend solely on their ability to reduce poverty and achieve economic growth.

In the end, we are left with one question, previously raised in the theology lunchtime discussion group. Why does CA focus on trade when such a focus excludes the poorest countries? The world’s 49 least developed countries accounted for less than half of one percent of world trade in 1999. Other statistics show that the wealthiest 20% of the world’s population make up 86% of total private consumption while the poorest 20% of the world’s population make up 1.3% of total private consumption. (Marrs 2002, 103) A focus on trade also excludes the poorest within countries. CEAS, because trade is irrelevant to the lives of the people in the communities in which they work, focuses on ensuring the state is responsive to the needs of its citizens. CA, on the other hand, working within the context of development, addresses poverty reduction and economic growth, leaving the discussion of citizenship separate to economics.

### 3. Localisation: An Alternative to Managed Globalisation

‘What we have at present is an array of largely futile efforts by political activists, from trades unionists to development NGOs, to tame globalization. Campaigns for labour standards or fair trade or voluntary ethical codes fundamentally mistake the nature of the trade liberalisation beast. These attempts are like trying to lasso a tiger with cotton.’ (A Futile Trade Campaign? [2000])

CA’s attempt to manage globalisation is critiqued by those working in post-development. In contrast to CA’s view that globalisation is irreversible and potentially positive, those activists and theorists who critique globalisation argue that it is not only negative but also reversible. This section focuses on one of the alternatives raised initially by CA supporters in the God and the Global Economy workshop, questioning CA’s policies on trade and globalisation: localisation. One of the central tenets of localisation is a rejection of the focus on the global capitalist economy, in particular the focus on increasing economic growth through international trade. The turn toward the local encompasses the political and social aspects of communities as well as the economy. Citizenship and consumption are equal foci. The differences between this and CA policy re-emphasise that policy, as well as spirituality and faith, has to be subject to suspicion.

After the Senior Policy Officer on Trade and Globalisation presented the policy to the God and the Global Economy Workshop there was a question and answer session. Most of the questions raised focused on alternatives to economic globalisation, including localisation. They asked if localisation was a better option to achieve poverty reduction than the focus on international trade. One person asked about the links between global inequality and trading out of poverty through the global market. Another asked about the contrast between subsistence farmers, those who produce for local areas, and those who produce cash crops for the global market. Yet another asked if this focus on global trade was detrimental to local development. Do people have to participate in globalisation? In response to these myriad questions, the Policy Officer acknowledged that this debate is still ongoing within CA. She does not see globalisation and localisation as necessarily in opposition. Neither does the World Bank. In contrast, those promoting localisation argue that it is distinct from and in opposition to globalisation.

As part of this debate within CA, Hines was invited to present a talk entitled ‘A Futile Trade Campaign?’. Although not entirely opposed to CA policy, the quote above

shows that he is critical of a focus on managing international trade. He emphasises the importance of a focus on the local. In contrast to CA who argues that globalisation is a given, Hines rejects the idea that the globalisation of trade liberalisation and neoliberal economic policies is irreversible. Instead, there should be a set of policies introduced that aim for localisation.

### 3.1 What is the alternative understanding of development and globalisation emerging from the discussions?

‘An economy in sustainable development adapts and improves in knowledge, organization, technical efficiency, and wisdom; it does this without assimilating or accreting an ever greater percentage of the matter-energy of the ecosystem into itself but rather stops at a scale at which the remaining ecosystem can continue to function and renew itself year after year.’ (Daly<sup>21</sup> 1996b, 195)

For those who favour localisation, globalisation has a wider definition than the one CA used. In the God and the Global Economy workshop, Gorringer distinguished his definition of globalisation from that of CA. Globalisation cannot be limited to an increase in the speed and scale of economic activity. Rather, it has at least four characteristics.

The first characteristic is the extension of corporate power throughout the global marketplace, reflecting the globalisation of capitalism. The multinational corporations hold more power than most world governments, a point detailed by the Senior Policy Officer on Trade but not emphasised in the definition of globalisation itself. This characteristic has led to a ‘loss of power and control for the nation state.’ (Gorringer 1999, 79) People with money participate more as consumers in the marketplace than as citizens of the state. Unlike a democracy, which should be run by its citizens for its citizens, ‘the growth of ever larger corporations is driven by the quest for profit,’ which ignores the impacts on humanity. (80) Profit is prioritised over people by these structures, a point critiqued in the following chapter.

This is linked to the second characteristic, which is the ascendancy of financial capital (money) to global status. This characteristic also contributes to the loss of power of nations. ‘The power of people like the financier George Soros to destabilise national currencies has been amply demonstrated.’ (Gorringer 1999, 79) One person with access to money has more control over the economy than many country governments. In both

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<sup>21</sup> Herman Daly is an ecological economist.

of these characteristics, people's participation in the economy, which requires money, takes precedence over people's participation in their governments, to which all should be equally entitled.

There are two further aspects to the present situation of globalisation that cannot be ignored. Vandana Shiva, physicist, philosopher of science, activist, and writer, has emphasised the dangers of biopiracy, a new form of the piracy that has existed throughout history. Biopiracy is the extension of patent law to cover natural resources and knowledge, which have previously been considered common property.<sup>22</sup> Piracy, for Shiva, has been a common theme throughout the history of globalisation.

In this understanding, the first phase of globalisation began with Christopher Columbus and the imperial experience. CEAS argues similarly from the Brazilian situation.<sup>23</sup> This experience was a Christian enterprise; thus, Christianity has to be considered in any discussion of globalisation. Latin America and Africa were considered to be empty land waiting to be taken. The second phase of globalisation extended the concept from land to people. People on that land were also seen to be empty, needing to be owned or filled with Northern knowledge. Northern culture and knowledge was to be globalised. The Christian mission has always been bound together with imperialism and trade. In the current phase of globalisation, companies are accomplishing what countries attempted under colonialism. Even nature, including genetic knowledge can be owned, a point also critiqued in the following chapter.

The final characteristic of globalisation in this perspective, according to Gorringer, comes from Karl Marx. Marx argued that base precedes superstructure: economy precedes culture. For Aristotle, 'speech was given to us to form community,' but for Adam Smith, founder of modern economics, 'speech was part of our propensity to barter.' (Gorringer 1999, 31) Where Aristotle viewed economics and society together, now the economy is seen as the basis of society. This assumption allows the expansion of the McDonald's culture, not acknowledged as Western, with its particular brand of capitalist economics to the entire world. Such an assumption is wrong as any economic system contains cultural elements. An economic system cannot stand outside culture just as it cannot stand outside politics. It is the globalisation of neoliberal capitalism that is

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<sup>22</sup> For a detailed analysis of this piracy through the example of the neem tree, see Shiva and Holla-Bhar 1996.

<sup>23</sup> The links between the colonial era, development, and globalisation are explored by CEAS in the fourth chapter.

the problem. It is a particularly Western economy, being promoted as global, that is subsuming other cultures and other economies.<sup>24</sup>

Economics then is another term that has to be redefined.<sup>25</sup> When its cultural elements are ignored it is 'defined as 'the study of the production, distribution, and consumption of wealth in human society'.'<sup>26</sup> (Gorringe 1994, 29) However, in reality, economics is a merging of the economic, political and cultural, as the term political economy used to show. 'Economics means literally 'the law or the management of the household.' (Meeks<sup>27</sup> 1989, 3) Economics begins at the level of the family, at a local level and then expands out to larger communities. This understanding is in complete contrast to the current global economy based on the individual, which tries to separate out economics from the political and cultural realms.

In fact, the emphasis on the individual is actually an emphasis on money, prioritising money over human beings.

'The structuring of the household so that some freely define their needs while the life-maintaining needs of others are not met leads not only to the exploitation of those who are left without livelihood; it also dehumanizes the life of those who are within.' (Meeks 1989, 173)

People are not only excluded due to lack of money, they are also considered to be less important than money. Even people with money are only valued as long as they have money. Such an understanding has to be rejected, as the following chapter explores.

Power is central to any discussion of economics. Smith recognised that 'economics is about power because wealth is power.' (Gorringe 1994, 29) Power needs to be re-recognised as a relevant factor. The term political economy covers this. It 'involves the social relationships of power among the members of a community in their attempt to earn a living.' (29) Not only are relationships emphasised but the element of community is also re-emphasised, a point considered theologically in the following chapter. CEAS specifically addresses power in the context of community, as the fourth chapter explores. Economics has to be redefined as part of a whole society.

The definition of poverty is also expanded in two ways in this alternative understanding. It is not limited to economics and it is not limited to a negative

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<sup>24</sup> Thierry Verhelst, a development practitioner, makes this argument in his book *No Life Without Roots: Culture and Development*.

<sup>25</sup> There are some working within the field of economic theory who also criticise the basic tenets in use today. See Keen 2001 for one example.

<sup>26</sup> From the Penguin Dictionary of Economics, 1987.

<sup>27</sup> M. Douglas Meeks is a professor of theology at Vanderbilt University.

connotation. 'There is also an important distinction between poverty as subsistence and misery as deprivation.' (Gorringer<sup>28</sup> 1994, 134) This understanding has disappeared from the mainstream because it does not fit into the global economy. 'Western observers declare any non-participation in the world economy to be poverty.' (134) Yet, that is not always the case. Prioritising the poorest, considered theologically in the following chapter, would also allow for non-participation in the global economy. This is not a point that CA considers.

The focus on a single economic definition of poverty has devalued the idea of choosing to be economically poor.

'Poverty was ... the name for a unique and ecologically sustainable style of coping with historically given, rather than technically construed, necessity, the 'need' to face the unavoidable, not a lack.' (Illich 1992, 93)

There is a distinction between voluntary and involuntary poverty. Poor does not necessarily mean impoverished. It can mean choosing to live within ecological and other limits. 'The search for new modes of life and social organization based on simplicity, or on voluntary or moral forms of poverty, were devalued and discredited.' (Rahnema 1992, 163) Localisation is a return to prioritising other factors than consumption.

Wealth can also refer to other aspects of life, aside from money. It is possible to call this broader definition of wealth romantic but even within global economics, it is widely accepted that Gross National Product (GNP) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP)<sup>29</sup> are inadequate and do not describe wealth. 'The claim of capitalist economies is that they enhance life by producing wealth. The claim of their critics is that they do so only at the expense of some members of the system, not accidentally but necessarily.' (Gorringer 1994, 41) The global capitalist economy does not work for the poor and has an inflexible and inaccurate definition of wealth.

Reversing these characteristics of globalisation does not, however, have to entail a return to the past. Hines argues that it is globalisation that is attempting to return to the

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<sup>28</sup> Gorringer is paraphrasing Shiva.

<sup>29</sup> GDP is the amount of goods and services 'produced by the economy.' The goods and services are valued 'at market prices.' These goods include investments. GNP is GDP plus income that domestic residents make from their investments abroad, minus the money that foreign investors make from the domestic economy. (Bannock, Baxter and Davis 1992, 186-187) Halstead and Cobb critique GNP as a measurement, which keeps social and environmental destruction out of sight. It takes no account of damage to the environment and use of nonrenewable resources, counts accidents and other destructive events as positive economic events, focuses only on monetary transactions, and takes no account of the distribution of income. (Halstead and Cobb 1996)

past, putting the clock back as it ‘reduces the security, basic needs provision and employment prospects for billions for whom things had been improving since the Second World War.’ (Hines 2000, x) Globalisation is exacerbating poverty rather than reducing it because it refuses to focus on local communities.

- First, economic globalisation demands ‘more international competitiveness, less public expenditure, less community activity.’ (57) Countries have to focus on external markets rather than on their own citizens.
- Second, economic globalisation requires ‘opening of government procurement to international competition.’ (58) CA too critiqued the international trade rules that do not allow governments to put their own citizens and companies first when deciding who can get government contracts for services.
- Third, economic globalisation requires the goal of agriculture to be ‘competition, not feeding people locally.’ (60) Farmers are encouraged to produce for export rather than to provide food for their own country’s citizens.

Hines and others in favour of localisation repel these demands.

With the renouncing of economic globalisation comes a rejection of the focus on economic growth by some but not all critics. Hines argues that growth within limits is still possible, while others including Gorringer argue that economies should aim for a steady-state.<sup>30</sup> This concept, detailed by Daly, understands an economy to be a system in equilibrium with the environment. ‘The economy is an open subsystem of the earth’s ecosystem, which is finite, nongrowing, and materially closed.’ (Daly 1996b, 193) A steady-state economy recognises ecological limits and works within these boundaries. Growth can only occur up to these limits. After that, ‘matter constantly circulates internally.’ (Daly 1996a, 235) Nothing is wasted but is recycled to continue the system without further ecological damage.

Because capitalism assumes unlimited growth, it must be rejected. Rejection of growth includes a rejection of profit, explored theologically in the following chapter. ‘Rights and obligations will be at the heart of the new economics, and the central concern will be enabling people to meet their needs and develop themselves.’ (Gorringer 1994, 166) Instead of profit, people are at the centre. Money returns to its original conception as a means of exchange; money cannot make more money in and of itself. ‘The redemption of money will involve... the abolition of usury.’ (167) Profit, interest, and growth are all rejected in the local economy.

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<sup>30</sup> For further characteristics of a steady-state economy, see Daly 1996b and Goodland 1996.

In the God and the Global Economy workshop, Gorringer provided the example of the Asian tigers, a set of countries in East Asia, which achieved high economic growth over several years, moving out of the category of less developed countries, as used by the IMF and the World Bank. Agencies like CA and Oxfam have used the example of these countries to call for growth with equity.<sup>31</sup> Yet, there were also negative effects in these countries. ‘How does one balance the gains ‘against the democratic deficit, the suppression of minority groups, and irreversible environmental devastation’?’ (Gorringer 1999, 62) Economic growth cannot take precedence over democracy and the protection of the environment, as CEAS also argues.

Development, then, cannot contain unlimited economic growth in its definition. Only ‘development without growth’ is sustainable. (Daly 1996b, 193) Development, if not rejected completely, is defined qualitatively not quantitatively.<sup>32</sup> It enhances ‘people’s lives without increased throughput.’ (192) Throughput is the impact on the environment. Development (evolving and changing) does not equal growth (getting bigger). At the same time, those who are using more than their share of the earth’s resources have to drastically reduce their consumption. Hines too argues that there are ecological limits to growth but is not specific about what these limits are.

Poverty reduction is achieved at a local level without environmental destruction. Hines’ advocacy of localisation, not globalisation, is located between that of CA and Daly. While CA still argues that trade liberalisation could lead to poverty reduction and growth, Hines argues that it could not. Instead, growth has to come only at the local level from savings and investment generated locally. Hines also re-emphasises equity. ‘Making the domestic market the engine of development brings up the linkage between sustained growth and equity.’ (Hines 2000, 86: Box 8.1) The money generated locally should be controlled locally and should remain local in order to keep the results as equal as possible. ‘Democratic control over capital is the key to providing the money for governments and communities to rebuild local economies and improve environmental and social conditions and job opportunities.’ (91) Social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental considerations are all combined in this local approach to development.

Aid, development work, and advocacy could all focus on localisation. Aid would focus on attaining a level playing field for all local communities, including access

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<sup>31</sup> Oxfam: *Growth with Equity: An Agenda for Poverty Reduction*. September, 1997.

<sup>32</sup> This definition is still a wish list not a definition of current events. Rist would argue that there has to be a different word describing what is hoped for to distinguish potential practice from what has already occurred.

to technology and information. International development, defined qualitatively, could still be a goal if it rejects the global economic system and aims to ensure improvements in equality within and between local communities.

‘Most development NGOs and movements want democratic control over the commons, national resources and productive assets in order to redistribute land, ownership and wealth in such a way that increases equality and protects the environment permanently.’ (Hines 2000, 186)

Thus, organisations like CA could continue to take the lead toward localisation.

### 3.2 What is the alternative conception of reality when economic globalisation is not assumed *a priori*?

‘If the standard of living enjoyed by the North cannot be generalised, then the issue of consumption has to be addressed by the wealthy nations.’ (Gorringer<sup>33</sup> 1999, 75)

This rejection of a globalised economy, reliant on ever-increasing growth, does not mean that global action is rejected altogether. Those in favour of localisation advocate developing ‘a credible set of overarching policies which will secure the end goal of relocating economies worldwide.’ (Hines 2000, 32) Such global policies will emerge from local communities working together. Gorringer, among others, advocates the proposals published in the 1992 United Nations Human Development Report.<sup>34</sup> ‘The UN is the natural starting point for bring the global economy under democratic control, providing proper democracy can be established there.’ (Gorringer 1999, 100) The WTO could change into a World Localisation Organisation. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, on which the WTO is based, could change to a General Agreement on Sustainable Trade. An international organisation like the WTO is crucial because it represents ‘effective world government for the first time in human history.’ (Hines 2000, 134) The local must be prioritised globally.

Prioritising the local community means rejecting the concept of economic specialisation. CA, in contrast, would accept specialisation if it led to poverty reduction. Specialisation rests on the theory of comparative advantage. This theory argues that ‘nations do best from international trade when their industries specialize.’ (Hines 2000, 10) Countries stop trying to be self-sufficient. Instead ‘each one should produce what it

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<sup>33</sup> Gorringer is paraphrasing Daly.

<sup>34</sup> For Gorringer’s specific suggestions for the WTO see ‘When is Free Trade not Free Trade?’ in chapter four of Gorringer 1999.

can produce most cheaply.’ (11) Countries focus on the products that would make them most competitive internationally.

Specialisation focuses on inexpensive economic production, overlooking several associated issues. For example, environmental consequences are not taken into consideration. In addition, when the theory of comparative advantage was created, capital investment (money) was assumed to be local, which is no longer the case. Finally, this theory has no ‘notion of power.’ (Hines 2000, 13) In the global market, there are no transactions among equals. Structures of power exist and international trade occurs within an unequal system. The power to bargain is determined by history alongside other factors. Rather than continue to work within this unfair system, those in favour of localisation argue that countries should develop their own ability to be self-sufficient.

To achieve economic self-sufficiency, domestic goods should be favoured above imports. Imports would be controlled regionally and nationally allowing local areas to produce as much of their own food, goods and services as possible. Where DfID emphasises the need for Northern countries to end such subsidies and import barriers, localisation activists argue that the Southern countries need to introduce such policies to develop their domestic markets. Gorringe, in the God and the Global Economy workshop, used the examples of British residents eating potatoes from Egypt when they are already grown in the UK and strawberry yoghurt, which ‘carries with it 3494 km of haulage.’<sup>35</sup> (Gorringe 1999, 98) Strawberries too are grown in the UK. There is no reason why they should be imported. Only after all possible local trade is exhausted, could other trade take place between nations with good human rights records or other qualifications. Such rules could be decided globally.

International free trade is rejected entirely. The ‘dogma has been used as a stick to beat the weak, but has been ignored by the strong.’ (Gorringe 1999, 72) Free trade gives power to those with money. While CA’s rules on international trade are a step in the right direction, ‘much export-led growth has proved disastrous and done damage to sustainable local agriculture, producing poverty and famine where there was previously subsistence.’ (75) Thus, the focus has to return to the local.

It is not enough to change the international trade rules to prioritise the local, the power of TNCs also has to be reduced. Localisation advocates emphasise the negative impacts of TNCs on local communities, as did CA. TNCs deplete natural capital, human

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<sup>35</sup> Norberg-Hodge 1996b details how the end of transport subsidies would necessarily lead to a more local focus on production.

capital, social capital and institutional capital.<sup>36</sup> (Korten 1999, 76-7) They contribute to the destruction of:

- the environment;
- human beings through ‘maintaining sub-standard working conditions’; (76)
- communities by ‘breaking up unions... and uprooting key plants on which community economies are dependent to move them to lower-cost locations’; (77) and
- institutions, ‘as they pay out millions in campaign contributions to win public subsidies, bailouts, and tax exemptions.’ (77) This results in destruction of democratic rule, with the public less aware of their actions, particularly those to block regulation.

CA also acknowledged the lack of local accountability, which allows this destruction. Instead of prioritising the local, corporations prioritise wealth alone. They ‘concentrate wealth in the hands of the very rich,’ which exacerbates the gap between the rich and the poor. (79) Localisation activists believe that only a focus on the local will prioritise the poor, a point returned to in the following chapter.

Those in favour of localisation argue that TNCs need to be dismantled, in contrast to CA.<sup>37</sup> TNCs cannot be reformed through regulation because by their very nature they put profit ahead of all other considerations. ‘Profit comes first; growth is a close second; amorality comes third.’ (Mander<sup>38</sup> 1996b, 309) Simply changing the regulations guiding TNCs will not solve the problem because profit and growth are characteristics of the international system in which they work. The destruction they cause is ‘inherent in the forms and rules by which they are compelled to operate.’ (310) It is the structure of TNCs, along with their adherence to the international economic system, that is the problem. Profit and prioritising the poor cannot go together.

Once broken down, TNCs will be prevented from re-forming by an international rule whereby a company can only be located in an area where it will be selling its products. If a business is selling locally, then at least local citizens will have a means of controlling the business through their use of consumer power. This is called a site-here-

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<sup>36</sup> David Korten, an economist and president of the People-Centered Development Forum, describes each of these four concepts further. (Korten 1999, 76-7) Using the word capital to describe nature, society, etc., gives each element a means of being described in an economic context. This change could be dangerous in its ability to limit a discussion of these concepts to their interaction with the economy.

<sup>37</sup> Starr 2000 details how communities and organisations around the world are organising around the concept of taking apart TNCs.

<sup>38</sup> Jerry Mander is president of the International Forum on Globalization and a senior fellow at the Public Media Center in San Francisco.

to-sell-here rule. (Hines 2000, 63) Such a rule will automatically shut down TNCs without adversely impacting local business. 'Given an adequate transition period, an economic realignment like the site-here-to-sell-here policy, should pose little problem for most small and medium sized firms, whose markets are predominantly local.' (70) Local communities, including local businesses, are promoted.

Local control, however, is not limited to economic power. The crucial difference in localisation is that the consolidation of different types of power is limited to a local level. Local action is not the indirect action taken by CA supporters in the trade campaign. Instead, there should be the introduction of economic democracy.<sup>39</sup>

'Democracy should not be considered as an electoral input over who controls the economy, but also in terms of access to participation in the economy and the development of individuals' and local communities' potential and capacities.' (Hines 2000, 118)

Economic democracy entails economic decisions to be taken at local levels. It expands out the definition of democracy from the political realm. People will be able to participate directly in their economic and political communities.

Participation in the economy becomes democratic. 'The power equation is turned on its head when groups of small producers join together to create marketing cooperatives. Ownership control, however, comes from the bottom- from local owners with a direct stake in the enterprise.' (Korten 1999, 178) One example of such a business is John Lewis<sup>40</sup> in the UK, which is owned by its workers. In an economic democracy, investors also remain actively involved with the business they have invested in. Finally, instead of being separated from the process, a worker will be connected to 'the product of his or her labour,' 'the act of production,' and 'his or her fellow human beings.' (Gorringe 1994, 80-1) People will have a stake in the selling of the products they have created in community.

With an emphasis on ownership at a local level, comes a change in management ideology. 'Given that leadership is necessary, it can be shared between tasks and can be supportive or participative rather than directive.'<sup>41</sup> (Gorringe 1994, 89) Just as the concept of ownership widens, so too does the concept of management. It is shared in community.

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<sup>39</sup> For a detailed explanation of how economic democracy would affect governments and companies see Makhijani 1992.

<sup>40</sup> For more information on John Lewis see <http://www.john-lewis-partnership.co.uk>.

<sup>41</sup> CEAS implements a similar strategy in its organisation with rotating leadership and a focus on consensus.

Political democracy is also crucial in this situation; it is not just the economy that needs to be localised but also political participation. Consumers need to be able to be active citizens, involved in more than deciding what to buy. If economics is to be local, then the political processes that govern the economic systems also have to ensure participation at a local level, as CEAS emphasises. 'For democracy to result in an improvement in the social and economic lot of the vast majority, real local control over the direction, means and end-goal of the way the economy is organised, and who gains and loses from it, is required.' (Hines 2000, 121) Local democracy involves both politics and the economy.

Localising economic and political participation also decentralises power, a concept central to CEAS' work. 'Political and economic power are closely linked in that possession of either increases the holder's ability to exercise the other.' (Korten 1999, 68) Localisation reduces the amount of power available to consolidate, while at the same time increasing the possibility for people to have a voice in decision-making processes. In order to ensure this, decisions have to be taken at the local community level but they will have global impacts. 'Local decisions should reflect a global perspective and an acceptance of the rights and responsibilities of global citizenship.' (69) A local community cannot only look inward but needs to relate to other communities.

In order to ensure that such local democratic participation occurs there could be a citizen's income. This income would be 'a modest payment payable to each individual as a right of citizenship,' which could replace the current system of social insurance. (Hines 2000, 122) This would require a complete overhaul of the way communities are governed today. 'A citizen's income would provide a measure of security, making part-time work and self-employment more attractive, allowing people to develop less rigid patterns of working more consistent with their own needs.' (122) People would commit part of their time to participating in community decision-making processes and another part of their time to other forms of working.

The perception of what work is would change. There would be 'a reduction of the number of hours expected in a lifetime's employment... and a form of job sharing so that we all have job portfolios consisting of our regular job plus various kinds of marginal and gift work.' (Gorringe 1994, 71) Work would not necessarily generate money. It would not be for individual gain but for the community.

These suggested changes focus on local communities rather than on consumption or the economic realm alone.<sup>42</sup> A healthy community would include:

- ‘good housing, shops, and other facilities, with good public transport’; (Korten 1999, 38)
- ‘good education, training and work opportunities’; (38)
- ‘diverse wildlife and good air, water and soil quality’; (38)
- ‘low energy use and waste’ and ‘warm homes’; (39)
- sustainable lifestyles with ‘less unhealthy and unnecessary consumption and resource use’; (39)
- ‘a safe and healthy environment’; (39)
- ‘quality information enabling the monitoring of social, economic and environmental progress’; (39)
- ‘a vibrant and creative culture’; (39)
- ‘high levels of public participation in decision-making’; (39) and finally,
- ‘the means to facilitate on-going improvements in the area.’ (39)

Life and its associated decision-making are rooted in local communities, a concept unpacked theologically in the following chapters.

These changes will not be easy, particularly for the poorest communities. Aid and development agencies will play a key role. The transition has to include ‘the aims of providing basic needs sustainably, improving human rights, reducing the power gaps between different groupings and genders, and increasing equity and democratic control over decision making.’ (Hines 2000, 31) While the richest communities will have to lower their consumption, the poorest will have to be able to improve their standard of living. Localisation aims at reducing the gap between the rich and the poor both by making the poor richer but also by making the rich poorer, a concept not emphasised by CA.

The communities themselves will have control over their own process of development, defined as evolving qualitatively. ‘Localisation is something done by people, not something done to them.’ (Hines 2000, 31) Communities will be empowered to create their own solutions. ‘Historically, significant community development tends mostly to take place when people in a local community are committed to investing their

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<sup>42</sup>Korten addresses changes at four levels: the individual, the community, the country and the global. (Korten 1999, 266-73) His suggestions are directed at mainly middle-class communities in the North, emphasising the simplification of lives.

time, skills and resources in the effort.’ (31) Everyday actions will impact the process of development in local communities.

None of these potential benefits erase the difficulty of the shift. Nor do they erase the possibility that there will be power discrepancies and other problems at a local level. ‘The term potential is used, since local control need not guarantee increased democracy, equality, environmental protection and so on, it just makes it more likely.’ (Hines 2000, 33) There will still have to be a commitment to these concepts at a global level.

There are already examples of localisation around the world. However, ‘they are forced to exist under the hegemony of the market.’ (Gorringe 1994, 168) With a corresponding change in the global system, they will have more of an opportunity to succeed. ‘In the struggle for fullness of life, we are called to make a clear option on the side of the God of life and against the Baals of profit and power.’ (170) It is a choice between God and Mammon, as the following chapters detail.

## In Conclusion

This chapter analysed the reality in which CA is developing and reflecting on its policy. This reality is the starting point for engaging with the spirituality. Beginning with the trade campaign objectives and how they can be met, this chapter set the scene for CA's general policy on trade and globalisation. The campaign aims to change the rules of international trade to prioritise the poor and to regulate the TNCs to do the same. It will achieve these goals through using the economic and political power of CA supporters.

CA places international trade within the contexts of development, defined as poverty reduction and economic growth, and globalisation, which it defines as an irreversible but manageable process of increasing interconnectedness. From this context, international trade is seen as positive as long as it leads to poverty reduction and economic growth. Yet, different understandings of development and globalisation lead to different ideas as to how and when international trade should occur. Rejecting the focus on economic growth and the globalisation of the capitalist economy also leads to rejection of the focus on international trade. From this rejection emerges a focus on the local.

These different policies can be subjected to suspicion alongside the emerging theological elements. Three clear starting points emerge from this discussion: the bias toward the poor, the importance of community, and the impact of Mammon (money) on individuals and structures. Each of these is addressed in the following chapters.

Finally, these conversations over policy have taken place in the North. The perspectives of the overseas partners remain unclear. The fourth chapter details one partner's approach to merging faith and (post-) development practice, focusing on the political realm.

## Chapter Three: Theological Reflection: The Struggle Toward a New Earth Where Justice will Rule

### Abstract

This chapter provides the critical reading of faith crucial to the process of action and reflection. This part of the hermeneutic of suspicion provides the counterpart to the suspicion of policy, analysed in the previous chapter. For CA, this theological reflection is set in the context of a struggle toward a new earth, which will be God's reign. Justice is the central goal of this struggle. To move toward justice, CA reflects theologically on the concepts of community, prioritising the poor, lessening the wealth of the rich, and redeeming sinful structures. As with the differing viewpoints in the policy discussions, there are also diverging analyses over the policy implications of the theological issues. This reflects the emphasis on an issue-based theology emerging from reflection in community. Following the hermeneutic circle, with the addition of partner analyses in the following chapter, can help to shed light on the praxis of CA in the context of development and globalisation. This reflection is crucial for CA as its moral power stems from its faith-base.

To set the theological reflection alongside that of the policy six questions are posed.

The first section, Towards a New Earth answers the following question.

1. In what theological context is the discussion of development and globalisation set?

The next section, Justice, answers the second question.

2. What is the end goal of the theological praxis?

The third section, What Justice Requires, considers the theological understandings of community, the poor, and the rich, answering four further questions.

3. Why prioritise the community over the individual?
4. Why should there be a bias toward the poor?
5. Why lower the wealth of the rich?
6. Are structures (like TNCs and the WTO) sinful, and if so, how can they be redeemed?

Each of these is further examined in the fourth chapter in the light of the experience of CEAS.

## 1. Towards a New Earth

### 1.1 In what theological context is the discussion of development and globalisation set?

‘We will not live under the rule of evil where some children die for lack of proper food. We will live by your kingdom, where you are preparing on this earth a feast for all the poor. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory.’ (Christian Aid 1999a, 13)

‘God has promised a new earth where righteousness shall have a home. II Peter 3:13’ (Christian Aid 2000a, 1)

The theological language that CA uses to explore the concepts of development and globalisation centres on a new earth, a concept taken from II Peter 3:13. CA is working toward the goal of this new earth.

‘God hopes and works for a new earth where all shall be included in the feast of life... We long for the time when the meek shall inherit a new earth and all who hunger and thirst after justice shall be satisfied.’ (Christian Aid 2000a, 3-4)

This new earth is God’s kingdom, where justice will be the guiding principle. CA is struggling toward this new earth with its combined practice in relief, development and advocacy, including its campaign for fairer international trade. The Churches team, in particular, uses this language of God’s kingdom and a new earth to link policy and theology. ‘Our prayer is that, through this booklet, you will discover more of God’s heart for justice and will take action to help extend his kingdom.’ (Christian Aid 2002a, 4) This quote introduces a booklet produced for Christian groups to study issues of justice in action, like CA’s trade campaign.

Staff members, supporters, and partners have all used the concept of God’s reign or a new earth to describe CA’s practice and goals. ‘The prophetic vision is beautifully presented in a world order which will be egalitarian, inclusive, harmonious and the rule of God- Godly values such as justice, truth, love, compassion, caring and sharing will take place.’ (Ninan 2000, 6) Ninan provided specific examples of how the kingdom might emerge in practice, in the regional staff conference, quoting Isaiah 65: 17, 21, 22.

‘For I am about to create new heavens and a new earth... They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat...’

The use of this scripture to describe the new earth seems to lead to particular policies, such as self-sufficiency and localisation, discussed further in the chapter. Tiongco too

offers possibilities for practice, stemming from the Jubilee legislation. Values in this new earth could include 'redistribution,' 'release of slaves,' 'remission of debts,' 'restoration of property,' and 'rest for the land.' (Tiongco 2000b, 7-8) Following the hermeneutic of suspicion, these Scriptures are examined at CA in light of today's reality.

This newer CA symbol of the new earth compliments the traditional focus at CA on life before death, reflected in the campaign's name 'Trade for Life.' All CA publications have the CA logo and the strapline 'we believe in life before death.' This signifies the belief that Christians are to work toward changes in this life. Both of these concepts reflect the focus in liberation theology on God's kingdom as coming into being here on earth. Christians are not waiting for the new earth to be introduced from the outside. As the director of CA stated, CA staff members are considered co-workers with God in this process.

The language of the new earth and God's kingdom is not analysed on its own within CA but forms a baseline for the discussions of justice, community, the priority of the poor, reducing the wealth of the rich, and sinful structures. It is this vision of God's kingdom that inspires the trade campaign: Trade for Life. SCAC, for example, recommended that the Campaigns team choose the issues of trade and globalisation for the campaign because it would reflect CA's belief in life before death. The Campaigns team itself uses the language of life in all of its literature. Each international trade rule chosen for emphasis is defined as deadly in its current form and is to be changed to one that enhances life.

The Churches Team emphasises that trade is an issue in the struggle for a new earth. 'In Jesus Christ we see how costly it is to bring that new earth about. Exploitative trade is at the heart of the painful conflict that provoked the passion story at the heart of our faith.' (Dudley 2002, 14) Christ's life provides a direct example of this link. His crucifixion was set in motion when he overturned the tables in the temple. Jesus confronted the power of the market and it cost him, ultimately, his life.

The Book of Revelations provides another example of trade as central to the struggle.

'Some believe it is an extended allegory about exploitative and ruthless power expressed in empire. Ancient empires, like modern monopolies today, concentrated the benefits of trade for a few at the expense of the many and corrupted politics to protect its privilege.' (Dudley 2002, 14-5)

Trade benefited the rich instead of the poor, increasing their power further. The same situation exists today. In Revelations, God reassured the people that the earth would be

renewed. 'Behold the dwelling place of God is with men (sic)... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.' (Rev. 21: 3, 4) God's new earth will end death and pain.

Although the discussion of the empire in Revelations reflects economic, political, and societal elements, CA's focus remains on the relationship between theological concepts and economic globalisation. Throughout this chapter, the concepts emerging from CA's theological discussions also focus on the economic aspects, although Gorrington introduces the need for a more holistic approach. The fourth chapter will expand the consideration of God's new earth out to the political realm, as that is the focus of CEAS.

The choice to be made regarding trade is stark: life or death. 'I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live...' (Deuteronomy 30:19) This passage was to form the basis of the trade campaign pledge. However, the Campaigns team changed this to a verse emphasising the choice of life alone. 'I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows). (John 10:10) This verse was the inspiration for the end of the trade campaign pledge: 'life in all its fullness.' Both verses emphasise life, however, the seriousness of the wrong choice should not be overlooked. Sin is what 'makes life in all its fullness impossible.' (Gorrington 2000b, 80) The concepts emerging in this and the following chapters consider sin from this perspective.

Secular post-development practitioners also present the seriousness of the current situation in terms of a choice between life and death. For example, Korten compared the global capitalist economy to a cancer that brings death, arguing that communities should work to 'starve the cancer, nurture life.'<sup>1</sup> (Korten 1999, 262) Thus, this emphasis on life before death crosses between the theological and policy discussions.

This focus on a new earth as the basis for the theological discussion at CA contains four elements, emerging from liberation theology. First, is that the kingdom is both spiritual and material. It is not 'something purely interior that occurs in the depths of our souls. No, it is something planned by God that occurs at the heart of a history in which human beings live and die and welcome or reject the grace that changes them

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<sup>1</sup> Korten's suggestions for nurturing life focus on local communities and formed part of the discussion on localisation in the previous chapter.

from within.’ (Gutiérrez<sup>2</sup> in Nickoloff 1996, 173) God’s work and God’s new earth are not spiritual concepts that exist outside of history but they are spiritual and material concepts that exist within history. The spiritual and material are not separated.

CA staff members and supporters emphasised the material aspect of God’s new earth when discussing CA’s theology.

‘I like the fact that it’s in the here and now and the emphasis is on justice in this world rather than salvation in the next.’  
(Interview 22, 2000)

This person reflects the importance of Christian action for justice as crucial in this world, not waiting for salvation after death. Because God’s kingdom is material as well as spiritual, all CA action, even if it is not overtly linked to Christianity, points to the new earth. This understanding of the reign as material and spiritual also means that CA can be inclusive of those who do not believe in life after death. It is a concept, which spans across faiths and appeals to those of no faith. CEAS also emphasises the importance of a multi-faith perspective.

Second, it is God’s reign but it also requires human action. ‘The kingdom is a gift, a *grace* of God, but also a *demand* made upon us.’ (Gutiérrez in Nickoloff 1996, 173) Working toward the new earth is a crucial part of an active Christian life, not an option.

‘The kingdom of God is something more than historical liberations, which are always limited and open to further perfecting, but it is anticipated and incarnated in them in time, in preparation for its full realization with the coming of the new heaven and the new earth.’ (Boff and Boff 1987, 53)

Christian action in this life points toward and prepares for the full introduction of the new earth. This action stems directly from the example of Jesus. Although Jesus proclaimed that God would bring about the Kingdom, he still acted on this earth to bring about change, as God continues to do today. ‘God fulfills real, immediate needs, without prejudice to what other needs the reign will satisfy.’ (Sobrino<sup>3</sup> 1996, 49) Jesus could have simply stated that the new earth would come and then sat back and waited. Instead, his actions pointed toward the new earth.

CA staff members also emphasised that Christians have to act on their faith. God and humans together are working toward this new earth. ‘The stark message of Joel is that all the prayers in Christendom for Mozambique or Orissa or Ethiopia are a waste

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<sup>2</sup> Gustavo Gutiérrez is a Peruvian liberation theologian.

<sup>3</sup> Jon Sobrino is a Spanish Jesuit priest living and working in El Salvador.

of breath if they are not matched by a change in the lifestyle we lead.’ (Graystone 2000) Throughout the CA regional conference, Graystone, an Adult Christian Education Adviser, led the worship sessions. He focused on the book of Joel, linking ideas of recycling and redemption to the new earth.

‘The death of Jesus was recycled into resurrection, with eternal significance for lives. The departure of Jesus was recycled into the coming of the Holy Spirit, the very Spirit of God living among us to bring his presence into every moment of our lives.’ (2000)

Humans have to act but they are not acting alone.

The Holy Spirit is also present in the struggle for a new earth, an understanding central to liberation theology. ‘Like the Son, the Holy Spirit was sent into the world to further and complete the work of integral redemption and liberation.’ (Boff & Boff 1987, 55) The Spirit, living in the communities, directly participates in, and encourages people to participate in, the work toward the new earth.

It is important to many staff members, supporters and partners that the spiritual and material understandings of the new earth be balanced. For example, Ninan, at the regional staff conference, suggested that II Peter 3:13 could be kept in its entirety: ‘but we look for new heavens and a new earth according to His promise, in which righteousness is to abide.’ By discussing both the new heavens and the new earth, the past, the present and the future will be equally emphasised addressing the wholeness of humanity. Graystone’s work, with its spiritual references, can then compliment the work of other teams without overt theological statements if the process of action and reflection is occurring.

Emphasising God’s role in bringing about the new earth also places God on the side of CA’s work, giving support to its action. Humanity is not alone in the struggle.

‘Our efforts alone do not ‘add up’ to the kingdom. Our attempts to choose right actions may be modest, and flawed. We realise that we need God’s grace in our own weakness as individuals and as organisations. We recognise forces that are too powerful for us alone...’ (Dudley 2002, 7)

God’s intervention in the struggle will be crucial because it is not only individuals who must change but structures too.

Third, God’s reign will be introduced fully in the future but it is also present now. It is God’s presence on earth. ‘This twofold aspect is captured in the term ‘eschatology,’ which refers both to the future and to the historical present or, in other words, to an event that is *already* present but has *not yet* attained its full form.’

(Gutiérrez in Nickoloff 1996, 174) The new earth is not only something looked toward but also through Christian action the new earth is already appearing. Sinful action in this world, then, cannot be excused because Christians are to work toward this new earth. Eschatology is the ‘culmination of all human struggles, longings and hopes in the Reign of God.’ (Grey<sup>4</sup> 1997, 108) Christian action is eschatological, anticipating what God’s new earth will fully introduce. ‘It is not a kingdom ‘of this world’ (John 18:36), but it nevertheless begins to come about in this world.’ (Boff and Boff 1987, 52) While Christian action is not perfect it does uphold the kingdom values, pointing toward the new earth.

The alternatives will only fully replace the existing system when God’s new earth arrives, as Christ’s time on earth confirms. ‘The early Church interpreted the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in terms of power.’ (Elliott 1987, 15) Jesus’ death, as Dudley intimated, was due to the challenge he made to those in power.

‘Although some would still view Jesus as an innocuous religious teacher, it is becoming increasingly evident to many that he catalyzed a movement of the renewal of Israel- a movement over against Roman rule as well as the Jerusalem priestly aristocracy.’ (Horsley<sup>5</sup> 1997, 1)

Jesus was encouraging the introduction of a new earth in opposition to the current society. Crucifixion was the punishment for those who flouted Rome’s authority.

Yet, Jesus’ death by crucifixion was not the end of the story. Jesus overcame those who killed him by coming back to life, showing the limits to the power of the current system. Neither is resurrection the end of the story. ‘The absorption of the power of the powerful does not lead to the immediate overthrow of the emperor or the dictator.’ (Elliott 1987, 128) God’s new earth has not yet fully arrived although glimpses of it are here. Paul ‘insisted that Christ was now reigning in heaven and, ‘after every rule and every authority and power,’ would ‘hand the kingdom over to God the Father’... In the end, no human, including the now exalted Jesus Christ, would have a monopoly on power.’ (Horsley 1997, 147) The earthly authorities did not succeed because God’s power led to Jesus’ resurrection and they will not succeed because God will one day introduce the new earth, a concept further explored in the section on principalities and powers.

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<sup>4</sup> Mary Grey is a Catholic feminist liberation theologian.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Horsley is a biblical scholar and professor of Liberal Arts and the Study of Religion at the University of Massachusetts.

Paul's creation of Christian communities after Jesus' death and resurrection provides a model for working toward God's reign on earth. 'The principal term Paul uses with reference both to the movement as a whole and to the particular local communities is *ekklesia*,' which is normally translated as church. (Horsley 1997, 208) However, in this case, the religious and the secular are integrated. The term is political and religious as life in that time period was not separated into secular and religious elements. 'Paul insisted... that his *ekklesiai* should be exclusive communities, open to recruiting from, but otherwise not participating in, wider imperial society, whether in civil courts or in temple banquets.' (8) The new communities, pointing toward the new earth were not part of the existing system but an alternative to the entire economic, political, and cultural system, as Jesus had advocated.

Differences emerge in the discussion as to how far toward the new earth Christians are to work, depending on which of (and how) these first three elements are emphasised (God's reign as material, requiring human action, and already present). The Churches team distinguishes between the practice of CA with its advocacy of reforms to the current system and other practitioners and theorists who want to overhaul the system. CA defines the different policies and practices as either pragmatic or prophetic. For example, Dudley has stated that in God's new earth there would be no power inequality. Yet pragmatic action has to take the current situation of inequality into consideration. While people in the North would not have more consumer power than those in the South in God's new earth, in the current situation, they should use their power to bring about change. Both the pragmatic and prophetic aspects are important to this struggle for a new earth. The focus on economic wealth and poverty, however, only challenges one aspect of power inequality, as the fourth chapter explores.

Some theologians argue that there does not need to be radical change within the global economic system, tempering its effects is enough. For example, Bishop of Oxford Richard Harries argues that the capitalist system itself can point toward God's new earth. 'If the Kingdom of God were here in its fullness, we could happily give away everything that we possess and trust moment-by-moment for God to provide.'<sup>6</sup> (Harries 1992, 48) However, God's new earth is not yet here. Harries does not emphasise the kingdom as already but not fully present. Instead, 'as that state (the new earth) has not yet been reached it is perfectly proper to be prudent, to take our own interests and the

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<sup>6</sup> It is important to note here that Harries is addressing his words to those who are rich. In fact, his book is entitled, *Is There a Gospel for the Rich?*.

interests of our families into account.’ (48) Self-interest is fine as is capitalism. The assumptions behind this argument are further considered throughout this chapter.

Some Christians argue further that the struggle for a new earth is political and therefore irrelevant to Christianity, as if there is opposition between the spiritual and the material realms. Dudley responds from statements produced by some of CA’s supporting churches that ‘the Five Marks of Mission,<sup>7</sup> affirmed by Anglicans world-wide and other denominations in Britain affirm that mission includes both responding in faith to human need, and working to transform unjust structures of society.’ (Dudley 2002, 7) The churches themselves support the need to work toward changing society now because it is unjust. The spiritual and material realms can be addressed together.

The final aspect of the discussion of God’s new earth is that it upholds particular values. ‘The kingdom requires us to change our present reality, reject the abuses of the powerful, and establish relationships that are fraternal and just. With this way of acting we accept the gift of the Lord’s presence.’ (Gutiérrez in Nickoloff 1996, 174) The change from the current values to those of the new earth will lead to the liberation of humanity. ‘The kingdom or reign of God means the full and total liberation of all creation, in the end, purified of all that oppresses it, transfigured by the full presence of God.’ (Boff and Boff 1987, 52) How the kingdom values affect policy and practice forms the basis for the remainder of this chapter.

The central value or goal of the struggle for the new earth is justice, the focus of the following section. ‘Liberation, the practice of justice, the construction of the Reign is not optional.’ (Sobrino 1996, 72) Christians, in working toward the new earth, have to aim for justice.

This new earth, with its goal of justice, will transform relations within community. ‘God’s dream of justice for the whole of creation’ includes ‘a re-ordering of relations which includes humanity’s relations with nature and the environment.’ (Grey 1997, 108) Human relations with each other and with the planet have to be redeemed, as the third section of this chapter details.

As part of this transformation, the poor have to be given priority. ‘It is the reality of Latin America and of the Third World in general that calls for a Reign of God, of whatever conceptual formulation.’ (Sobrino 1996, 44) According to Sobrino, this reality is the poverty in which the majority of the world’s population lives. ‘It is the poor who

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<sup>7</sup> For more information on the Five Marks of Mission see [www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/fivemarks.html](http://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/fivemarks.html).

will guide the fleshing out of what the Reign of God is today.' (62) Theology begins with the poor. Those without justice will decide what justice is.

## 2. Justice

### 2.1 What is the end goal of the theological praxis?

‘A just world is one where all men and women receive fair shares of the earth’s resources and can flourish as equally important beings in the eyes of God.’ (Mukarji in Curtis 2001, v)

‘We must identify what needs to be done to create a different world in which justice, compassion and peace benefit all people.’ (Right Reverend John Gladwin, Bishop of Guildford and Chair of the Board of CA, in Curtis 2001, vii)

God’s justice will rule the new earth, unlike the rule of ‘evil’ or injustice today. ‘God’s kingdom is characterised by justice, peace, harmony, protection of the vulnerable.’ (Tiongeo 2000b, 4) Justice has consistently been cited as the cornerstone of CA’s policy and purpose. In one of its formulations, the purpose of CA is to ‘support the world’s poorest communities to struggle for life and for justice.’ (Linden 1999, 2) CA’s relief and development work and its advocacy aim for justice, part of which is the ending of poverty. In this it is supported by many of the UK churches. For example, the Five Marks of Mission include a call to ‘transform unjust structures.’ This struggle for justice includes the partners overseas and CA supporters in the North. The example of CEAS in the fourth chapter confirms their struggle toward justice too.

Although justice impacts the social, economic, and political realms, the theological discussion at CA is limited to the economic spectrum. Dudley contrasts the lack of justice in the current global economy with the rule of justice in God’s economy. ‘The Biblical witness- and the work for justice- recognises that destitution has implications for each person.’ (Dudley 2002, 3) God’s economy is concerned with meeting the needs of every person. The global economy, in contrast, excludes many people.

The trade campaign also focuses on justice, further narrowing the discussion within the economic realm. The international grouping created by those organisations focused on trade has called itself the Trade Justice Movement. CA specifies in its campaign that trade itself is unjust. Thus, the rules on international trade need to be changed and TNC practices must be regulated. The campaign is working toward introducing justice as the goal of international trade.

The usage of the term justice reflects two of the elements in the discussion of God’s new earth emerging from liberation theology. First, justice is used in both theological and policy contexts by CA; it merges the material and spiritual realms.

While the Churches team documents emphasise concepts like ‘God’s heart for justice,’ staff members and supporters also specify acts of justice in today’s society. (Christian Aid 2002a, 4) This mixed usage reflects that of the prophets in the Bible. ‘The prophets understood justice as a theological term, inseparable from ‘their knowledge of Israel’s God, who is himself just and requires justice of people.’’ (Forrester<sup>8</sup> 2001b, 197) It is not possible to divorce justice from either its spiritual or material context, just as with God’s new earth.

Secular development practitioners also refer to the material and spiritual realms in their discussions of justice. Gorringer cites Daly’s analysis of sustainable development, which centres on justice. It ‘will require a change of heart, a renewal of the mind, and a healthy dose of repentance.’ (Gorringer 1999, 92<sup>9</sup>) Development has a spiritual context. ‘These are all religious terms, and that is no coincidence, because a change in the fundamental principles we live by is a change so deep that it is essentially religious whether we call it that or not.’ (92) In the fourth chapter, CEAS provides a clear example of the merging of the secular and spiritual contexts in the struggle for justice.

Most of the staff members and supporters interviewed used the concept of justice as a way to define both CA’s development work and theology. CA’s development work was described as a struggle for justice, which was directly linked to Christianity.

‘Christ came for the poor and the homeless. We’re called to bring justice to the world.’ (Interview 12, 2000)

Through the example of Christ, this person emphasises the purpose of CA and of all Christians to work toward justice. This justice is set in the material realm but references the spiritual realm. It includes exposing the scandal of poverty, contributing to the eradication of poverty by the partners, and challenging the sinful structures and systems that exist today.

Second, in order to achieve justice, there has to be human action. ‘The Old Testament suggests that poverty is not intractable, and unchanging, but that people sometimes need to act to bring justice into common life.’ (Dudley 2002, 4) The action for justice centres on poverty eradication in community. ‘If we understand that poverty is the result of systemic injustice, then campaigning to change the rules that make and keep people poor is an appropriate response.’ (7) Injustice causes poverty; thus, to act

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<sup>8</sup> Duncan Forrester is Professor Emeritus of Theology and Public Issues at the University of Edinburgh.

<sup>9</sup> Gorringer is quoting Daly. 1996. *Beyond Growth*. Boston: Beacon Press.

for justice is to end poverty. The method of merging faith with action is re-emphasised here. 'Acting for justice completes the intentions that can also be expressed in prayer and giving. Similarly, each of those actions- prayer and giving- 'rounds out' and completes the others.' (7) Struggling for justice, as for God's new earth, requires putting one's faith into action.

To define justice, in both development work and theology, staff members and supporters tended to contrast it with charity, which is not seen to be CA's goal.

Emphasising justice means,

'we don't want people to be dependent on charities for the rest of their life. What we want to do is make people independent.'  
(Interview 11, 2000)

In a just situation, no one would have to rely on aid from another person. Each person would have a fair share of the earth's resources. This understanding of justice emphasises major change on the part of the individuals and communities in the North, like drug companies allowing cheaper copies of drugs to be made, putting people before profit.

Charity, as the word is used today, focuses on changes in the South, like poverty reduction, which require the financial help of people in the North. Examples range from provision of food to provision of Christianity: 'helping your brother,' filling 'an empty stomach,' 'responsibility,' and 'duty to the poor.'

'It's the ethos, helping your brother... If I were in that position, I would want to be healed... And people can identify with that message... the Good Samaritan type thing.' (Interview 16, 2000)

There tends to be a distinction between the giver and the one being helped in a discussion of charity. The poor need the help of the rich but the poor themselves are not needed. Charity alone is not enough in the view of CA staff members and supporters.

The act of charity may also be a witness for later conversion to Christianity, a concept not emphasised in the discussion of justice. There can be an ulterior motive for the help.

'You can't preach salvation to a man with an empty stomach.'  
(Interview 24, 2000)

At the same time, the power in the exchange resides in the person being 'charitable,' reinforcing unjust structures of power, criticised further in the following chapter. In fact, many of those staff members and supporters involved in CA directly reject the possibility of proselytism, as the first chapter explored.

The example of the Good Samaritan is used to further distinguish between the concepts of charity and justice by CA staff members and supporters. During a SCAC discussion of a draft of the CA statement of faith, one of the participants criticised a reference to the Good Samaritan. The mission statement read, 'Like the Good Samaritan we need to stop in our tracks, rethink our notion of the common good and take immediate steps to safeguard the interests of poor people.' (Christian Aid 1999c) Showing charity, the Good Samaritan stopped and helped the person at the side of the road. However, the Good Samaritan did not solve the problem of injustice. He did not challenge the structures that allowed the person to be victimised in the first place. Other participants suggested the wording should be changed to stress the fact that the North and the South are struggling together, not just one on behalf of the other. In fact, this document was changed entirely before it reached its final form, in the light of many such comments.

A final example of justice comes from the life and actions of Jesus.

'There's a lot of biblical references about Jesus being on the side of the poor and the oppressed, like Luke 4 when he opens the scroll... ' (Interview 21, 2000)

Luke 4:18 reads, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,' a passage which is said to refer back to the Old Testament Jubilee legislation. This legislation is analysed in a later section. The people who emphasise justice detail how Jesus' attitudes and actions were on the side of the poor. The ones who discuss charity emphasise examples of Jesus feeding the poor. Jesus did perform both acts of charity and acts for justice. However, he was not charitable without calling for justice.

This prioritisation of justice over charity is a central concept in liberation theology. Many scholars argue that charity is subsumed in the struggle for justice. It is one of the consequences of God's ownership of the earth, considered later in this chapter. 'Taking possession, claiming something for personal use, fails to recognise that all the land is held in trust to YHWH, that each Israelite farms a small portion as a tenant.' (Gorringer 1994, 117) For Gorringer, because God owns the earth, no human being can claim ownership of it. Land belongs to God alone for everyone to share.

Two points about charity emerge from the analysis of God's ownership of the earth.

- First, charity, in terms of ‘the rich helping the poor,’ simply does not exist. (Gorringe 1994, 117) The rich do not own property. It is God’s. José Miranda, a Mexican biblical scholar and liberation theologian, distinguishes between charity and justice from a Biblical perspective. “‘To give alms’ in the Bible is called ‘to do justice.’” (Miranda 1977, 14) The Hebrew word translated as charity is in fact the same word as for justice. ‘Almsgiving for the original Bible was a restitution that someone makes for something that is not his (sic).’ (15) All riches come then from a situation of injustice. The poor should have the same access to the earth’s resources as the rich.
- Second, there should be no need for charity because there should be justice. ‘The Deuteronomists and others who worked on programmes for reconstruction emphasised the need of the Jubilee law, by which alienated property was restored to its original owners, so doing away with poverty altogether.’ (Gorringe 1994, 117) When the situation began to be unjust, the property was redistributed. ‘If these provisions were followed, said the Deuteronomists, ‘there will be no poor among you.’” (117) Charity only comes into existence where there is an unjust situation.

This emphasis on justice continues in the New Testament. ‘It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to go into the kingdom of heaven.’ (Matthew 19:24) This scripture is to be taken literally. It is not about the rich man abusing his power of ownership but ‘against differentiating ownership itself.’ (Miranda 1977, 18) This statement is likely to have come from Jesus, according to Miranda, because no early Christian community ‘would have dared to assert (it) if it were not basing its assertion on the authority of Christ himself.’ (18) It follows then that giving food to those who are hungry and drink to those who are thirsty is not optional but required to restore justice.

Thus, both the Old Testament and the New argue for justice. It is only after Christianity became intertwined with the ruling system under Constantine in the fourth century that the interpretations began to change. The rich began to overlook ‘the injustice by which property was acquired in the first place.’ (Gorringe 1994, 125) Narrowing the conversation from questioning ownership to suggesting charity ignores the injustice occurring.

God’s ownership of the earth is not the only reason that charity should be subsumed into the struggle for justice. ‘One of the major impacts of Christianity... has been to insist that all human beings are equal as equal creatures of the one God.’

(Gorringer 1995, 15) No one person is better than another in God's eyes. If people are being treated unequally, then 'justice is seen to involve standing up for the poor.' (16) Justice directly involves the prioritisation of the poor, as following sections detail.

The transformation of the concepts of God's new earth and justice into practice is difficult. It requires further reflection on both faith and reality. Theologians and development practitioners come to various conclusions as to what is the best means of ensuring justice in practice, as the remainder of this chapter considers in the light of CA reflection. For Gorringer, there can be no justice in the capitalist system. 'The world view generated by capitalism is marked by a manifold dualism, between fact and value, ethics and economics, freedom and equality, the individual and society, work and leisure.' (Gorringer 1994, 160) This dualism simply does not exist in reality.

Gorringer is particularly critical of the focus on the individual in capitalism, which leads to the destruction of community. From an individualist perspective, justice 'can only tell us what not to do, and what is unjust. It cannot tell us what is just.' (Gorringer 1994, 162) In order to define justice, the entire society or community has to be considered.

One group of US Catholic bishops agreed that justice does not exist in the capitalist system, producing a statement to that effect. 'The justice of a community... is measured by its treatment of the powerless in society.' (Gorringer 1994, 159) The importance of community and of the powerless to the discussion of justice are detailed in the following sections.

Gorringer's policy, which rejects capitalism, differs to that of CA and of other theologians. For example, Max Stackhouse, a professor of Christian Ethics, agrees with CA that 'globalisation is unavoidable.' (Stackhouse 2000b, 27) His theological focus on justice then stems from his view of this reality. 'The mixed results of globalisation will be more positive than negative if religiously and morally committed people engage the questions and bring their visions of justice wisely to them.' (27) Because there is not an alternative to globalisation, justice has to be dealt with within this context. In this view, it is not possible that the struggle for justice would call for a rejection of globalisation, as it does for Gorringer and for CEAS.

Theologians who emphasise the fact that God's reign is not yet fully on this earth, also temper their calls for the introduction of a just system now. This is despite the fact that the system is incongruent with the definition of justice. 'In the light of a Christian and human understanding, there is justice when neither partner in a relationship is in a position either to exploit or patronize the other; when they meet on a basis of

equality.’ (Harries 1992, 57) Harries’ definition of the global economy, in contrast, is one of power inequality. ‘It will always reflect the interest of the most powerful and work to their advantage against the most vulnerable.’ (94) Instead of rejecting the capitalist system, however, he suggests reform. ‘There is a basic congruity between the Christian faith and the free market.’ (3-4) The global capitalist system, although unjust, does not conflict with Christianity.

Other prominent theologians, like Michael Novak, a Catholic neoliberal theologian, deny that the global capitalist system is unjust, emphasising the need for the freedom of individuals rather than justice in community. In this view, ‘only a market system respects the free creativity and liberty of every human person.’ (Gorringe 1994, 160) Basing his theology on the individual, Novak celebrates the market. In his ‘theology of enterprise,’ also known as prosperity theology, the market is a positive mechanism through which Christians can act. (Novak 1986, 6) Through participation in the market, those who work hard receive the reward of money and those who do not receive their just reward of poverty. This theology is in direct contrast to that elaborated in this chapter and the next, which focuses on the sinfulness of individuals and structures that prioritise money (Mammon).

CA works in between the two ends of this spectrum merging its practice of charity with its call for and practice of justice. The following sections detail the theological reflection on this praxis. Although there are theologians who may be closer to CA’s policy position, it is Gorringe who is chosen to elaborate the theological aspects of the action and reflection for CA. Thus, there seems to be a divergence between the policy on global justice and the theological call for justice. The debate continues both in the policy and in the theological realm over accepting or rejecting economic globalisation and development.

Central to the discussions of justice have been two concepts: community and poverty. Contrasting God’s new earth, where all will receive fair shares, to this world, where all do not receive fair shares of the earth’s resources moves the question of poverty into focus. The poor are the starting point for a relationship with God. In God’s new earth, there is ‘a kind of preferential invitation to the poor, the marginalised and the excluded.’ (Forrester 2001b, 198) The poor will have justice in God’s kingdom. However, in this world, the poor are ‘begging for justice which should be theirs by right.’ (Camara 1969, 163) As Tiongco argued, poverty is the result of human injustice. In the current global economy, although there is no justice for the poor, ‘the economic system was never evicted; only’ the poor. (Althaus-Reid 2000a, 54) The poor are not

prioritised. This perspective has to be turned on its head. The economic system that leaves people poor and excluded, without justice, has to be rejected. CEAS follows this model, arguing that it is the poor who will decide what justice is.

Yet eradicating poverty is only one aspect of the struggle for justice. Justice encompasses more than the economic realm. Another aspect is the ‘reconciliation and restoration of community.’ (Forrester 2001b, 202) The end of the struggle for justice will be when people live in just community in God’s new earth. ‘To know God is to do justice.’ (Gutiérrez in Nickoloff 1996, 150) There is no use pretending that God is present where justice is not. As relationships between human beings are either just or unjust, it is impossible to have a relationship with God without having just relations with other human beings. It is to the concept of community we now turn to expand the understanding of justice.

### 3. What Justice Requires

#### 3.1 Why prioritise the community over the individual?

‘God created us to live together, in communities.’ (Dudley 2003a, 62)

‘If one member (of the body) suffers, we all suffer together with it... I Cor.12:26’ (Christian Aid 2001a, 34)

CA creates theology and policy in community. Further, as an organisation, CA focuses on the world’s poorest communities arguing that in the new earth ‘all shall be included.’ Thus, community itself has to be carefully considered.

Why should CA prioritise the community over the individual? Justice, the goal of the new earth, requires right human relationships. Justice is defined in community, in relationships between human beings, not with reference to one individual. God is only present in just relationships; God is not present in unjust ones. Yet, unjust relationships rule the world today. The struggle toward a new earth then must aim toward right human relationships.

Community is central to daily life, although human relationships are often hidden.

‘It is the hands of others that have grown the food we eat, sew the clothes we wear, build the homes we inhabit... we can no longer live our lives independently. Increasingly we have come to rely on others not just in our local communities but worldwide.’ (Greenbelt service [2000]).

This sermon highlights the differences between today’s world and the new earth described in Isaiah where people build their own houses and grow their own food. To provide examples of this interconnectedness, the service continues with the sharing of fairly traded bananas, grapes and chocolate amongst the members of the congregation.

CA literature, as well as staff members and supporters, links the discussion of trade directly to community. People in their daily trading, a CA regional team leader stated, are hidden and alienated from the associated human relationships. Goods are not purchased from their original source, the producer. The symbol of the trade campaign, unbalanced scales, emphasises this point. ‘Honest scales and balances are from the Lord; all the weights in the bag are of his making.’ (Proverbs 16:11) The current trade system is unjust, not using God’s weights. ‘The unbalanced scales symbolise the fact that current trade rules are weighted against the poor. And the human figure at the centre reminds us that people, including ourselves, are the key to changing this.’ (Christian Aid

2002b) Human beings and their relations with each other are at the centre of the changes to be introduced to the international trade rules and TNCs. The scales have to be weighted in favour of the poor.

At present, trade is conducted through and exacerbates unjust relationships. There is ‘increasing inequality (which) dehumanises people, destroys communities and their capacity to check the power of the strong for the good of the weak. More profoundly, it distorts spirituality and faith.’ (Dudley 2000b, 3) The trading system promotes inequality, which harms community. ‘This (inequality) destroys communities in two ways: at one extreme, people are excluded from communities... at the other extreme people are buying isolation and lack of accountability to communities.’ (3) In the case of the richest, and of the poorest, community is destroyed because of these unjust trading relationships. Each becomes further alienated from the other. Thus, the issue of community has to be discussed in tandem with that of poverty, as the following section details.

In response to the current destruction of communities, there has to be a focus on renewing communities. The Bible provides several examples of how communities can respond to the unjust system.

“The New Testament primarily speaks of a household and community ethic. People are exhorted to be community-reliant, to care for their own and their Christian neighbours. Communities where there is mutual caring and mutual governance... are the New Testament political and economic ideal. They are also the ideal in Isaiah’s vision of economic regeneration...locating political power where people live and work.’ (Dudley 2000b<sup>10</sup>)

The New Testament stories are set in community, re-emphasising the life in community advocated in the Old Testament. First and foremost, the Bible shows that humans are to live in community.

Jesus’ life and actions and Paul’s communities can then be a model for Christians today. They were ‘the salt, light and leaven of the kingdom of God in Israel and among the peoples.’ (Duchrow<sup>11</sup> 1995, 180) These communities showed how justice would rule in God’s new earth. ‘Jesus links up with the Jewish idea that Israel should be(come) an alternative society which is so attractive that all the peoples should come in astonishment to Zion and change in its image.’ (182) People in the wider

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<sup>10</sup> Dudley is quoting a CA Staff Conference Working Paper by Northcott.

<sup>11</sup> Ulrich Duchrow is a German theologian and social thinker who works closely with the WCC.

society will be attracted to these just communities, which show there can be an alternative to the current global system.

The central focus in these biblical communities is on the neighbour, a concept that is both local and global. The choice of life is that of caring 'for the neighbour.' (Gorringer 1994, viii) Caring only for oneself ensures death. This caring would ensure the end of all relationships of domination. Paul saw 'that race, class and patriarchy were the things which destroyed human beings.' (Galatians 3:28) (ix) These features still separate humanity today, as the experience of CEAS in the following chapter shows. These elements of domination have to be addressed in community. 'Human beings are at the deepest level community beings. ...When community disintegrates life becomes literally impossible.' (9) Finding a way to live in community, both locally and globally, is crucial for life itself.

Renewing community can begin at the local level, although CA does not emphasise this aspect of the discussion. Gorringer, in his presentation to the God and the Global Economy workshop, stated that in Philippians the church, or alternative community, was announced first as local and only then as global. The Christian church was from the beginning, an

"imagined community," ...not rooted in kinship... whose purpose was to provide... a rooting, for human beings. In a society characterised by very stable, religiously undergirded family ties, Jesus calls into being a community of voluntary commitment, willing to take on the hostility of this society.' (Gorringer 1996, 263)

The local community is the basis of action pointing toward God's new earth. This community then expands out from the local to include all human relationships.

At the heart of the Christian community is the concept of communion. The word "community" has roots in the New Testament word '*koinonia*' which can be translated as fellowship or communion. (Gorringer 1997, 68) Communion describes life in the Christian communities and, in particular, describes the sacrament of the Eucharist, celebrated in community. 'Fellowship with Christ... sharing... in the blood of Christ... works itself out practically in the sharing of resources with other communities.' (68-9) Daily life and sacramental life are intertwined.

The sharing of the Eucharist provides a model for how sharing can occur in community today, a concept with which CEAS agrees as the fourth chapter will explore. This sharing includes 'bread, holding all things in common, and selling one's possessions.' (Dussel 1988, 11-2) As the Eucharist shares the body and blood of Christ

equally amongst the Christian community, so too should all goods be shared equally in community, a concept which could be further explored by CA. Further, as the Eucharist is a sacred sharing of God's body, so too is the sharing in community sacred. Thus, consuming should be done reverently as a later section explores.

- Expanding out from the local level, the first step to rebuilding community is to 'dwell' there. (Grey 1997)

Community has to begin in reality: physical, environmental, and social reality. This dwelling includes building relationships between humans, between humans and animals, and between humans and the environment. This is especially crucial for Christians because of the history of Christian domination, as Gorringer's definition of globalisation made clear. 'It is clear that-in the crucial historical period when capitalism developed-Christianity became the text underpinning dominance over both nature and indigenous peoples.' (Grey 1997, 64) This domination continues today through biopiracy. Just communities have to reject any form of domination, a point emphasised by CEAS.

Dwelling in community includes respecting the environment, God's creation. CA emphasises two related principles, although neither is a direct focus of the policies on trade and globalisation. First is diversity, 'in which different ways of life, cultures and species are celebrated.' (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 34) Localisation activists also emphasise diversity. There is a 'belief in the goodness and potential of the myriad aspects of God's creation.' (34) No aspect of God's earth should be destroyed.

Second is the understanding of sustainability.<sup>12</sup> 'The resources available to us: material, personal and spiritual... (have to be) used carefully and efficiently with respect for their interrelatedness, without denying them to future generations.' (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 34) Resources have to be shared in community, a community that includes future generations. This respect for the entire earth community is reinforced by God's ownership of the earth, a concept addressed further on.

- Tradition is a crucial resource, as community also includes history.

In rebuilding community, people do not start from nothing. 'If we could orient ourselves to tradition less as a burden, and more as a positive resource, an orientation to the future, then new possibilities emerge.' (Grey 1997, 81) Looking to the past, to a community's culture, does not mean not moving backward but building on previous

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<sup>12</sup> The issue of environmental sustainability, along with diversity, is at the heart of many discussions of development and globalisation today, although it is not a direct focus of either CA or CEAS in this context. See de Santa Ana 1998 for an overview of this concept.

experience. 'Never has there been a greater need for the recovery of solidarity with the past struggles to create authentic ecclesia, communities of justice, of truth and fidelity to the vision of the Kingdom of God.' (82) The Christian church has a long history of working toward God's new earth beginning with Christ. All of these examples can and should be explored to contribute toward the practice of living in communities today.

- Yet tradition is not enough on its own; transformation is also crucial.

Communities are always holding the past, the present, and the future in tension. 'Transforming society in the name of the ethics of the Kingdom, through its witness to truth and justice, is the most cherished part of the Church's mission.' (Grey 1997, 92)

The Christian tradition of struggling toward God's new earth has to continue to transform communities today. They cannot be satisfied with the status quo because the new earth is not yet fully present. 'Too often the ethics of Christian community have made alliances compromising with and even stimulating the deadly systems of violence which dominate so-called civilization.' (93-4) Throughout Christian history, there has been a tendency for these communities to move toward supporting the unjust and unequal system, whether it be economic or political or social, rather than challenging it to move closer toward God's new earth. This acceptance has to end, as the section on principalities and powers further considers. Instead,

'understanding humanity and all living entities as fundamentally interdependent, an ethics of connection resists any interpretation which privileges one section of humanity over another, any structure which blocks right relation and thus any form of community which embodies wrong, unjust or exploitative relation, injurious to humanity and creation alike.' (97)

Communities working toward the new earth have to challenge structures to do the same, encouraging just relationships. CA policy places itself within this struggle for transformation, supporting the partners who work to eradicate poverty and challenging the structures that create this poverty in the first place.

A crucial characteristic of a transformed community then is equity. In a just community 'everyone receives a fair share of the earth's resources, the opportunity to develop and flourish as human beings, and the chance to exercise their responsibilities for themselves and others.' (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 34) The earth is shared and participation in just community is also shared. For CA, equity is central because all human beings are equal, created in God's image. Equity is one of the key principles behind localisation as well. Every person should have equal access to housing, education, a healthy environment, and participation in community. This standpoint

requires the prioritisation of the poor (economically and politically), as analysed in the following section and in the case of CEAS.

- Finally, in order to merge tradition and transformation, dreaming is critical.

God's new earth also requires imagination. This 'passion for transformation' into the new earth, 'will not be sustained without ...the dimension of vision.' (Grey 1997, 99) Because the reign of God is not yet here in its fullness, it has to be envisioned. This imagination contributes to the process of action and reflection, enabling movement from the current situation toward God's new earth. 'This God of the dream' has 'the power to make right and just relation, the power to make the connections, the God in travail for the birthing of the Kingdom... a God of hospitality.' (105) It is through imagining community in right relation, supported by tradition, that transformation can occur.

With this emphasis on renewing community, comes a rejection of its opposite—the focus on the individual. This individualism is central to the current global economic system. Yet, in the past, the term political economy was used to show that power relationships in community were central to the practice of economics. The experience of Christian communities also shows the importance of considering human relationships.

'The inescapable feature about the earthly Jesus is' that 'He called people out of their isolation and alienated patterns of relating into a transformed relational way of being, where just relationships were the embodiment of the dream of the Kingdom of God.' (Grey 1997, 37)

Humans are to live in just relation with one another, not alone, although the current global system seems to say otherwise. 'Christian discipleship offers a life-style completely opposed to the privatized, consumerist ethic, exploitative both of the planet's resources and of groups of poor people whom it considers expendable.' (37) The Christian community is an example of how life should be: just in patterns of consumption, just in its treatment of the planet, and just in relation to each other. Life should not be focused on consumption. People have to move their focus away from consumption and onto the wider life in community.

This focus on community by CA and others is in contrast to the emphasis placed on the freedom of the individual by free market theologians. Novak, for example, argued that the market is positive because of its prioritisation of individual freedom. Poverty can be a just result of the system, associating wealth with reward for participation in the market. Basing the market on individual accumulation means 'I

derive benefit for myself by doing harm to someone else.’ (Althaus-Reid 2000a, 57<sup>13</sup>)  
God’s new earth does not work like this, however, in the view of CA.

In opposition to this free market theology stand the values of justice and community, neither of which are emphasised in the current global capitalist system. Dudley, in the day-long meeting to discuss trade and theology, pointed out that one of the problems with the capitalist system is that it prioritises the individual instead of community. For Gorringer, this fact means that capitalism simply cannot be supported. Yet, in the away-day discussion, the conversation was stopped because the campaign was not to be anti-capitalist.

As the distinction between prioritising the individual or the community shows, community is also an important concept at the global level. In Luke 10:29, the lawyer asks who is my neighbour?

‘Jesus demonstrates that it is the outsider, who has no ties of ethnic or religious obligation to assist the wounded man, who is the true neighbour to the one in need. ... The Old Testament Covenant community endorsed the importance of solidarity and culture yet nevertheless insisted on generosity to the stranger and the poor. In the New Testament, the New Covenant community is extended to be world wide.’ (General Synod 1998, 26)

Community begins at the local level but involves the entire world. No one is to be excluded, in complete contrast to the current global system. ‘This strange assertion that the alien and the enemy are neighbours, that strangers are neighbours, that people quite different from us are our neighbours, that people we do not know are our neighbours, vastly expands the sphere of moral responsibility.’ (Forrester 2003a, 45) The concept of the neighbour is expanded out from physical proximity to include all of humanity and beyond, just as trading relations have expanded out from the local level.

Human beings are expected to care for all their relationships, even those that may be hidden, as one CA staff member stated. ‘These neighbours are fellow citizens with the saints and with us... they are entitled to justice, and given to us to be loved.’ (Forrester 2003a, 45) Every human being should be treated as equal in God’s new earth. CA uses this concept to argue for fairer international trade rules in the economic realm, while CEAS focuses on encouraging citizenship in the political realm.

As CA and Gorringer both emphasise, the prioritisation of community over the individual would lead to changes in the economy. Secular development practitioners

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<sup>13</sup> Althaus-Reid is quoting Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*, p. 409.

agree. 'The goal of the economy should be the building up of communities rather than the expansion of markets.' (Cobb<sup>14</sup> 1994, 10-1) When community is prioritised, the orientation of the economy moves away from a profit motive, as analysed in the section on reducing the wealth of the rich. The starting point shifts from the individual who competes with others to the community that shares its resources. Such an economy is not based on capitalism. For example, the 'NGO Forum treaty on Alternative Economic Models from Rio' states that an alternative economy must:

1. be 'indigenous, community-based' and 'people-empowering';
2. ensure 'self-sufficiency of communities, regions and nations';
3. recognise the 'interdependence of all peoples... and the non-human material world'; (Duchrow 1995, 243-4)

There are alternative economic models already available that are based in community. These models prioritise the local community globally and require active participation, self-sufficiency and sustainability. In this case, then, there appears to be a direct correlation between the theological and the policy concepts of Gorringer, Cobb, and Duchrow.

CA policy, however, does not reject the global capitalist economy from its prioritisation of community over the individual, leading to possible conflicts between the theological reflection and the policy. Instead, CA argues that a focus on community can lead to positive benefits from trade. 'Trade is part of the common life of the people of God...in scriptures the common life of the people of God is expressed, not only in their worship, but in their economic relationships.' (Dudley 2002, 8) Trade and other economic relations have always existed and can emphasise the goodness of God too. 'Trading can be part of healthy community life... the Biblical witness, for example in Proverbs suggests that trade is neither good or bad in itself: the burden there is on fair trading.' (10) Just trade will take into account human relationships. For CA, this remains a possibility in the global trading system. For localisation activists and for CEAS it does not.

Another difference emerges in the policy regarding TNCs. For CA staff members, regulation of TNCs can ensure that they benefit poor communities. For localisation activists, including Gorringer, it is not possible for TNCs to favour the poor communities because of their very nature, which prioritises profit. Thus, they have to be

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<sup>14</sup> John Cobb, Jr. is an American theologian working on economics.

rejected entirely. Further analysis of these policies from the perspective of prioritising the poor and sinful structures will help to clarify these differences.

The analysis of community also impacts the political realm, although this is not the current focus of CA policy. For CA, human beings 'are made in the image of God with the ability to make a constructive contribution.' (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 34) A just community then should be democratic, allowing each person to participate. In a democratic system, citizens have the opportunity to participate equally. However, the decentralisation of power has to be ensured even within democracies and not assumed, a point CEAS makes clear. This concept of democracy is central to localisation policies too, encompassing both economic and political democracy.

Achieving a just political and economic community is not an easy task. 'No human society... has yet found the route to open and accepting community.' (Gorringe 2000b, 92) Yet, Christians continue to work toward just community, pointing toward the new earth. 'Confession of Christ's Lordship constitutes a permanent question to all political power systems, challenging their tendency to overstep the limits of their power.' (Gorringe 1997, 66) God's communities will analyse and criticise economic and political systems in light of Christian principles until God's new earth fully arrives.

There seems to be a distinction between the theological conceptions of community and CA policy. Both CA and those in favour of localisation advocate the prioritisation of the community over the individual to achieve justice. Thus, the theological reflection continues to determine from where the differences emerge. The issue of the bias toward the poor and the need to reduce the wealth of the rich as individuals and as structures will help to further illuminate the discussion of justice in community.

This analysis of community by CA reflects the struggle for justice and God's new earth. It also deepens the analysis of community with regard to the need for the prioritisation of the poor. In a just community, inequality will not exist. 'None of us can realise Jesus' promise of 'life in all its fullness' while some of us suffer violence, hunger, homelessness, torture, poverty-linked illness, marginalisation or environmental degradation.' (White and Tiongco 1997, 15) Living in just community requires prioritising the poor. 'Needs are met, in turn, in community, and the love of others through which God comes.' (15) The poor are at the centre, as they are in Latin America today. The following section addresses why the prioritisation of just community also requires a bias toward the poor. CEAS too will further integrate the discussions of

community and the bias toward the poor, as it is located in the communities of the poor that are struggling against the sinful structures that exacerbate inequalities of power.

### 3.2 Why should there be a bias toward the poor?

‘God’s design for a new earth is to put the poorest first, and the Gospel tells us the importance of bringing the poor good news.’  
(Christian Aid 2000a, 5)

CA literature and practice consistently assume a bias toward the poor and base this on the Christian struggle toward a new earth. This section examines the reflection by CA to determine why the poor should be prioritised. ‘Widespread poverty is an offence against God. ... (It) stunts human beings, who have been created in God’s image (Genesis 1:26,27)’ (Dudley 2002, 3) Poverty is not God’s plan for the world. Mukarji too specifies that Christians have looked and should look at poverty issues inspired by their faith.

CA’s practice is not just focused on the poor but on the world’s poorest communities. CA’s strategic plan on advocacy is to ‘tackle the root causes of poverty and inequality.’ (Christian Aid 2000b, 6) This advocacy, which works to expose the scandal of poverty, compliments the partner struggles to end poverty. Both the development work and the advocacy address the structures of poverty while the relief work serves to alleviate the immediate and desperate poverty.

Its theology then emerges from and reflects on this focus too. As Tiongco stated, addressing theology and development together is to act and reflect on human relationships with God and with each other, as ‘poor and non-poor.’ (White and Tiongco 1997, 11) The issue of poverty is central. CA staff members also defined theology directly in relation to poverty. For one participant, theology is ‘the church in action with the world’s poor.’ For liberation theology, the poor in community are not only central to theology but are the starting point of theology, as the CEAS example shows.

As with the previous theological concepts, the reflection on poverty is limited to the economic realm by CA. Development combines poverty reduction and economic growth. In discussing the campaign, CA directly relates trade to the prioritisation of the poor. The symbol for the trade campaign, the unbalanced scales, represents the unfair world trade, currently working against the poor. Trade, in contrast, should be part of the solution to poverty. Thus, international trade rules and the TNCs are to prioritise the poor.

How does CA define the poor? CA's understanding of poverty in its policy is in the mainstream of development practice. This perspective centres on a global economy focused on consumption with economic growth as the answer to material poverty. When limited to this economic context, the poor are those who are not benefiting from the global market. Such a definition exists alongside CA's statement that its partners should decide in their own contexts what poverty is.

CA's theological understanding of poverty also centres on the economic realm. 'Rooted in Gospel values, CA believes that every person has the right to have enough to eat, to have a decent home, etc.' (Christian Aid 2001a, 3) This understanding of poverty is based in human relationships. One is poor in relation to another. CEAS, as evidenced in the following chapter, also works from this perspective but refuses to limit the discussion to the economic realm.

Why are the poor poor? 'The poor are the victims of human injustice.' (Tiongco 2000a, 1) Poverty is not natural. God has not made people poor; people make each other poor through acts of injustice. The Old Testament prophets 'denounce the enslavement of the little ones, the abuse of power, and the perversion of justice itself.' (2) They are specific about the practices that lead to injustice. 'Woe to him who... makes his neighbours work for nothing and does not give them their wages. Jeremiah 22:13-14' (Tiongco 2000b, 4) It is this unjust treatment that leads to and reinforces poverty. Thus, an analysis of poverty also requires an analysis of human beings in just community. In a just earth there will be no poor.

Both the New Testament and the Old Testament confirm that God prioritises the poor. Tiongco has produced several papers dealing with this issue in response to questions from CA staff members.

'If Yahweh were the God of and for all, it would be logical to expect that God chooses a neutral stance. But the evidence is compelling that God takes the side of weak, the poor, those without influence or power; that Yahweh comes again and again to be their protector, their advocate, their defender, their father.'  
(Tiongco 2000a, 1)

God has deliberately chosen the side of the poor and marginalised because God is just. The prophets too are biased toward the poor, condemning the leaders for their injustices and announcing that God will bring about a new earth. In this understanding, the poor include the powerless, the central tenet of CEAS' wider definition of poverty, which also includes those powerless because of race or gender.

In the New Testament, the life and actions of Christ continue to show the prioritisation of the poor.

‘Christ- the Word made flesh- unequivocally identifies himself with the poor. The circumstances of his birth usher a series of events that puts Jesus in solidarity with the poor. He grows up in the obscurity, labouriousness and lowliness of Nazareth; as an itinerant preacher he ‘has nowhere to lay his head.’ (Tiongco 2000a, 8)

Christ is born into poverty and chooses a lifestyle which keeps him in poverty. He is also specific that it is in the treatment of the poor that God is found. ‘For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink... Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me. (Matthew 25:35-36,40)’ (8) Christ identifies himself with the poor. Thus, the entire Bible reinforces the need for a bias toward the poor. The poor know that God will re-introduce justice in a new earth because of this biblical bias.

If God prioritises the poor, then so should humans. ‘If God is on the side of the poor, where should the Church, where should Christians stand? If Christ identifies himself with the powerless and deprived, with whom should the Church take its place?’ (Tiongco 2000a, 9) Christians have to act to end poverty, as they work toward the new earth, following Christ’s example.

Toward what policies does the bias toward the poor lead? Both the Old and New Testaments provide examples of how the ‘values of the Yahweh’s kingdom can become a reality.’ (Tiongco 2000b, 6-7) Redistribution, release of slaves, remission of debts, restoration of property, and rest for the land, all part of the Jubilee legislation, have been mentioned. For Dudley, the economy should be subject to questions regarding poverty. Does the economy provide for ‘widows and the orphans’ (who were considered the poorest in the Old Testament)? (Dudley 2002, 5) In fact, it does not. Today poor people are still mainly women and children. If the economy does not meet their needs first then it should be deemed a failure, a point with which CEAS agrees. Yet, CA policy does not work from this perspective. The economy needs to be reformed but does not need to be rejected.

The question then arises as to what extent CA actually prioritises the poor. In the day of reflection theology and trade, one regional team leader, Peter West, emphasised the distinction between advocating equal access to the market and equality of outcome from the market. ‘The World Bank believes that if it reduces the proportion of the poorest to 10%, that is good.’ The international development targets also prioritise the

poor, advocating an increase in income, education, gender equality, and improved health care. Yet, these targets only require halving the percentage of the population living in extreme poverty. Working from the Old Testament tradition, it is still not enough if the gap remains large between the poorest 10% and the richest; the situation remains unjust.

Working toward God's new earth, the bias toward the poor will continue until poverty has been completely eradicated. In choosing policy, one must be 'careful neither to accept or reject economic or political policies too readily on ideological grounds, but will always require them to show compassion for the poorest and intention to improve their prospects.' (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 34-5) Neither globalisation nor localisation has *a priori* status in this view.

CA staff members do argue that no economic policy will be accepted or rejected until its intentions toward the poor are examined. 'The good news of God in Christ is for the poor, and ...by putting them first, the future for all of us will be secure.' (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 35) This should mean that if prioritising the poor requires evicting the current economic system, then CA would support it. However, CA policy currently accepts the process of development with its combination of poverty reduction and growth. They also argue that trade rules can be biased toward the poor in the global capitalist system. Implementing this bias will lead to greater equity, with all receiving 'a fair share of the earth's resources,' according to CA.

Those in favour of localisation reject the current global economic system because it does not prioritise the poor. For Gorringer, the system cannot prioritise the poor and profit at the same time. 'We have to be clear that what is to be challenged is profit and power.' (Gorringer 1994, 140) The following sections consider this aspect of the choice between life and death. While both CA and Gorringer prioritise the poor their policy differences emerge through consideration (or lack thereof) of the theological concepts of structures of sin and idolatry, as the sections on Mammon and principalities and powers consider further. For example, while CA argues that TNCs should be regulated, Gorringer argues that they have to be dismantled because they are sinful structures of power working against the poor.

Relating the priority of the poor to the global economy in the God and the Global Economy workshop, Gorringer asked whom economic globalisation benefits. The prominent theory in the global neoliberal economy today is that wealth trickles down from the richest to the poorest. The poor do not need to be prioritised. In this view, there is a moving column of history, which follows a straight line toward development. The back of the column does suffer along the way but that is a price that has to be paid.

To emphasise how the global economy harms the poor, Gorringe then provided the example of hedge funds. Anyone with money can invest in one of these stock market funds. A hedge fund that deals with poor country debt hedges its bets on the probability of a country paying its debt. This fund will buy up poor country debt from a bank or government at a discount and then act as the debt collection agency. This debt cannot be cancelled as countries cannot go bankrupt, although individuals can. One company dealing with these funds took Peru to court, according to Gorringe, and the court ruled that Peru had to pay its debt. 'Why do we allow such a vulture-like act to occur?' Not only does the economy prioritise the rich but it is defended by legal practice. This action is corrupt, because it disregards the need for the priority of the poor.

In contrast, free market theologians, including Novak, argue that the current market system is good for the poor. This system is 'not only inevitable, but also fair.' (Sung<sup>15</sup> 2002, 108) Poverty is not the result of injustice but a positive concept. 'It encourages competition between people and institutions.' (109) Priority is given to competition between individuals rather than to co-operation in community.

Others accept the need for consideration of the poor, but not to the detriment of the rich. Harries, for example, states that 'forced poverty is an evil' because 'it renders a person powerless and it brings suffering and death.' (Harries 1992, 11) Christians do have to work to counter poverty because it can be harmful to human beings. 'The requirement that the rich help the poor has been preached in each era and is a fundamental response to human sinfulness in the light of God's grace.' (Finn<sup>16</sup> 1996, 55) However, this working to alleviate poverty does not argue for justice over charity. It also does not reject of the global market economy. This economy can 'be underpinned by Christian values' because it is 'the worst system we've got-except for all the others.' (Harries 1992, 150-1) There is no other option but to take care of the poor in this system, just as for Stackhouse there is no other option but to work within the globalised situation. The just communities that will exist in God's new earth are not yet present. Charity, without justice, will suffice in this earth.

The poor are also rejected as the starting point of theology, in complete contrast to liberation theology. 'There is only one Gospel, for rich and poor alike.' (Harries 1992, 165) Although the poor are to be prioritised, the existence of rich and poor itself is

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<sup>15</sup> Jung Mo Sung is a Brazilian liberation theologian who emphasises the idolatry of the market in free market theology. This concept is addressed in later sections of this chapter and in the following chapters.

<sup>16</sup> Daniel Finn is an American professor of economics and theology.

not questioned. Inequality is not sinful in and of itself. This question of the Biblical basis for a bias toward the poor was also raised by some CA staff members.

Finally, not all who advocate the bias toward the poor acknowledge that poverty is necessarily the result of injustice. 'The plight of the poor becomes of particular importance *if* it results from unjust treatment by the wealthy and powerful.' (General Synod 1998, 28) In this document, the Church of England does not assume that poverty is definitely a result of the lack of justice. However, they do still work toward justice. 'Concern for the vulnerable leads to and demands a concern for justice.' (28) The distinction made here is in contrast to CA's and CEAS' understanding of poverty as the outcome of injustice.

It is clear that CA literature and practice have a bias toward the poor. However, not all staff members are clear about its theological basis. The different locations of CA's northern partners are clearly shown in the discussion groups and workshops. For example, in the lunchtime theology discussion group reflecting on CA's understanding of trade and globalisation, there was a range of opinion. One of the participants, a member of the Latin America & Caribbean team, spoke of the verse that suggests if a person has two cloaks they should give one up to the person who has none. One of the CEAS staff members, a Jesuit priest, uses this exact verse in one of his homilies and explores its literal meaning. This suggestion was countered by another participant who asked if it was right to have a bias toward the poor. This woman suggested that if all were treated equally before God, surely the rich should be treated the same as the poor.

Such a question does not emerge from the example of CEAS. Speaking from the poorest communities, they are already clear that the situation of poverty arises from the rich being prioritised over the poor. Thus, there has to be a bias in the other direction to counter this injustice, this sin. This injustice is not always evident from the location of the rich. Liberation theologians are clear that part of the bias toward the poor is allowing the poor themselves to decide what 'prioritising the poor' actually means, how justice can and will be introduced. At CEAS, for example, the communities decide their own priorities and CEAS then advises on implementation of these priorities. It is this difference in location that makes it crucial for the hermeneutic circle to be extended to include CA's partners overseas and communities of the poor in the UK.

The questioning of the bias toward the poor, although CA literature is clear that it does have this bias, raises a methodological issue. In the hermeneutic circle there should be a clear moving forward of the debate. Yet, not all CA staff members are aware of this discussion. This stagnation of the discussion also arises in the following

section, which asks why the rich need to give up their wealth. While certain theological concepts are introduced there is not a continuation of the process of action and reflection to move forward to further policy from the theology. Instead, when differences emerge, the theology is put to one side. This may be one reason why CA is clearer on the basis of the theological discussion (the new earth and justice) than on how its policy coincides with the specific theological concepts emerging from the consideration of justice in a new earth.

The rich and the poor are all part of the global community and need to be dealt with together. It is not enough to reduce poverty, while leaving the wealthy with their wealth. Localisation activists aim both to reduce the wealth of the rich and increase the wealth of the poor. While they are clear that globalisation has to be rejected because it exacerbates poverty, they are also clear that the level of consumption that exists in the North has to be lowered. CA policy, in contrast, focuses on how the poor will benefit from the changes not on how the rich will become poorer. Gorringer, and others, address both sides of this question. Thus, we now turn to the other side of the bias toward the poor: the reflection on reducing the wealth of the rich to achieve just community.

### 3.3 Why lower the wealth of the rich?

‘It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ (Mark 10: 25)

‘Why? Because the kingdom is that situation where there *are no rich and poor*. The rich, therefore, whilst they are still rich, cannot enter, by definition. The rich man who comes to Jesus is told to redistribute all his wealth.’ (Gorringer 1997, 41)

For CA, the level of consumption of the poorest can be raised. For post-development activists, including those in favour of localisation, such action also requires reducing the level of consumption of the rich. CA supporters say that people in the North should live simply so that others can simply live. Where does such a concept come from? From its location amongst those who have riches, CA can consider this question. Discussion within the organisation has already introduced three concepts around which further dialogue could coalesce: the call for the setting of limits on the economy derived from the Sabbath and Jubilee laws, God’s ownership of the earth, and the Eucharist as a model for consuming reverently.

- Setting limits on the economy from the Sabbath and Jubilee legislation

‘In the narrative of biblical radicalism, economic justice is the fundamental social goal of the people of God. The ancient vision of the Jubilee year... was periodically to deconstruct debt, land alienation, and bond servitude- the three stages of impoverishment resulting from indebtedness... We who have been socialized within the womb of capitalism dismiss such notions as utopian.’... But this attitude is precisely what is at issue in the conclusion to [the story of the rich man].’ (Gorringer 1997, 41<sup>17</sup>)

CA theological reflection, while not specifically arguing for a lessening of the wealth of the rich, emphasises the need to recover limits in terms of the economy and to set rules to ensure the limits are enforced. This emphasis is based on the foci of the trade campaign to change the international trade rules and to regulate TNCs. The goal is to ensure the gap between the rich and the poor is reduced. Those supporting CA’s work also address the need for limits. ‘Life on earth means recognising human finitude- living in relationship with creation and other human beings means that there are limits to individual freedom and power.’ (General Synod 1998, 26-7) The question for CA is what are the limits and what rules are needed to ensure that these limits are not breached. Is it enough to prioritise the poor? What does aiming toward equity and fair shares of the earth’s resources for all require of the rich?

Policy and scripture on limits intersect at several points. CA would like to further develop the discussion of the Sabbath and Jubilee laws in the Old Testament that emerged from the focus on debt. During the debt campaign, CA linked the cancellation of debts in Deuteronomy 15: 1-2 to the call for cancellation of unpayable debts in the poorest countries today. This cancellation would work toward ending injustice.

In Deuteronomy, there were two sets of laws put in place to ensure a return to justice. The Sabbath laws were to govern every seven years while the Jubilee laws were for every seventh Sabbath year. The Sabbath year was based on the Sabbath, a day of rest.

‘In the Bible ‘Sabbath’ signifies the day of rest after six days of creation of the universe. The creative power of God could have continued even for the seventh day but a conscious decision was taken not to apply that power but to restrain and keep a day as a symbol for relaxing, refreshing, reflecting.’ (Ninan 2000, 8)

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<sup>17</sup> Gorringer is quoting Ched Myers. 1994. *Who Will Roll Away the Stone?* New York: Orbis, 166-7.

Humanity should follow God's example of a balance between work and rest. It is not enough to prioritise the poor while allowing the economic system to continue full steam ahead.

The model of the Sabbath provides a way forward, suggesting that it is possible to stop and think about what should be done next, rather than constantly pushing ahead. There needs to be a rest from the devastation currently occurring on and to the planet.

'We have to campaign for 'Sabbath' ... (to) put a stop to this dangerous pursuit and the creation of potentially dangerous powers. This will be a long-term campaign and the church in the west can give leadership to develop new paradigms to save this earth and to bring about a New Heaven and a New Earth.'  
(Ninan 2000, 8)

Working toward the new earth through the trade campaign also requires rejecting the pace of the global system. There should be limits.

The Sabbath year in the Old Testament had a similar goal. 'In the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the Lord: you shall not sow your field or prune your vineyard' (Leviticus 25.4).' (Northcott 1999, 19) This rest of the land implied three important concepts to be remembered today.

- First, is that the earth's resources are limited. This includes both animals and the natural environment. The current global economy does not acknowledge this.
- Second, humans too have their limits. They need a balance of work and rest.
- Third, 'the fallow year had a function in relation to justice and the poor.' (19)

Not only was all of creation to rest but the poor had a chance to recover from their poverty. 'The landless poor were to be allowed to gather food from those fields, vineyards and olive groves which were left fallow and unharvested by their owners.' (19) This harvest by the poor was a way of redistributing wealth. In addition, debts were to be released.

The Jubilee year introduced a more extensive redistribution of wealth as a way to re-establish justice. 'The Jubilee law was instituted so that every fifty years lands and houses which had been lost to their original owners through poverty and debt were to be restored to them or their descendants.' (Northcott 1999, 18) Not only could the poor harvest the lands but also any land lost over the previous 49 years due to debt would be returned. These laws 'ensured that the natural resources of the people of Israel would be fairly distributed, and inequality limited, from one generation to the next.' (18) The redistribution, release of slaves and rest for the land, were all means of prioritising the

poor but they also were aimed at the rich. The goal was justice for every human being, which was seen to require equal distribution of resources. These laws helped to expose the need for charity to be subsumed in the discussion of justice. When injustice occurs, property and resources should be redistributed to reintroduce a situation of justice. Relying on charity alone is not enough.

In the New Testament, the life and words of Jesus reinforce the Jubilee aim for justice. 'The Periodicity of the sabbath ...is radicalized by Jesus and Paul.' (Raiser 1997, 23) It is refocused on the present day, as a continuing action. Redistribution is to be practised on a daily basis, not every seven or 49 years. Luke 4: 18-30 is often cited as an example of the link to Jubilee; it was also used by one of CA's supporters to describe the theology. 'Jesus is putting the structural justice of socio-economic reality at the heart of his mission, at the heart of the inauguration of the reign of God, the agenda of kingdom ethics.' (Grey 2000, 80) Jesus returns to the Jubilee legislation to explain what the new earth will be like. For Grey, because Luke addressed his text to the rich, the message of redistribution is not just to give hope to the poor but is intended to change the lives of the rich as well.

CA reflection sets the call for limits within a context of divine abundance. For Dudley, people will be less greedy and accumulate less if they have the reassurance that there will always be plenty. 'One of the central features of God's world is abundance managed by human will, and sometimes by restraint.' (Dudley 2002, 4) An alternative economy, then, could be based on abundance rather than scarcity. 'The Bible starts out with a liturgy of abundance... The power of the future is not in the hands of those who believe in scarcity and monopolise the world's resources, it is in the hands of those who trust God's abundance.' (10<sup>18</sup>) In the God and the Global Economy workshop, Dudley read II Kings 4:1-7. The prophet Elisha counsels a woman whose children are about to be taken into slavery because her husband has died and she has unpaid debts. Elisha advises her to borrow all of the empty containers she can from her neighbours. Then she is to take her last jar of oil and pour it into each of the containers. She does so and when all the containers are full, the oil stops flowing from the original container. She is able to pay off her debts with the oil and keep her sons.

Capitalism, in contrast, relies on natural scarcity, where each person is expected to compete for a share of the finite pie. People hoard because they fear not having enough. Yet, there will be enough resources for everyone on the planet if no one is

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<sup>18</sup> Dudley is quoting Walter Breuggeman, an Old Testament scholar.

greedy. 'In God's economy, 'there will be no poor among you' (Deut 15:4)...the author acknowledges that people will fail to exercise restraint. Only then is charity is required (v. 11).' (Dudley 2002, 5) Linking back to the discussion of justice, it is only when greed drives the economy that poverty will come into being. This occurrence then will require a return to justice to ensure abundance.

Gorringe, on the other hand, does not emphasise abundance. He argues that it is simply not possible to maintain the consumer economy due to the strain this places on the environment. Ecological limits will decide when the global capitalist economy will end, if a decision is not taken beforehand.<sup>19</sup> In Christianity as in many other religious traditions, limits are emphasised. The modern neoliberal economy has forgotten that there have to be limits, even to economic growth.

Although both CA's and Gorringe's discussion would seem to be leading to a rejection of the capitalist economy with its focus on unlimited growth, CA policy does not. While policy advocates redistribution and the need for a bias toward the poor, it does not specifically address reducing the wealth of the rich. Localisation policy is more specific on the need for limits. For example, trading should be limited to local areas while growth should be limited to what can be sustained ecologically.

The theological discussion of reducing the wealth of the rich also stems from God's ownership of the earth, the basis of the Jubilee legislation.

- **God's ownership of the earth**

'The resources available to us... are God-given and we do not own them.' (Lockwood and Madden 1997, 34)

God owns the earth and all its resources; humans do not. This concept is not further considered by CA, nor does it influence policy. However, it is suggested as a way forward in the theological reflection by Gorringe and others. Liberation theologians too stress that God's ownership of the earth means that resources should be evenly distributed as the following chapter considers. In just community, all should be shared. The Sabbath and Jubilee 'laws were designed to enshrine in law the fact that sharing in God's divine ownership of creation carries with it considerable obligations: to the land itself, to kin, to neighbours and to resident aliens.' (Northcott 1999, 19) The importance

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<sup>19</sup> Neither CA nor Gorringe emphasise ecology further but it is an integral part of the localisation set of alternatives. Ecotheology could contribute further to this discussion of limits. See Northcott 2001 for analysis of the links between ecology and theology.

for policy is to understand what these obligations specifically entail. With the setting of limits into this context, the new earth will be an 'era of liberty, peace and prosperity.' (Ucko 1997, 134) Working toward this new earth, Christians need to understand what God's ownership of the earth means for life in community.

What are the implications for human ownership and property? In the God and the Global Economy workshop, Gorringer read Psalm 24:1 'the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.' In terms of the campaign on trade, Cargill<sup>20</sup> controls seventy percent of the world trade in food and they are now patenting seed. If this patenting is allowed to continue then farmers will not be able to use seed from their own plants the following year. This is already the case with several types of plants. For Gorringer, any claim on ownership over life should be considered outrageous and rejected without the need for debate. God 'owns' the knowledge contained in seeds; companies should not act as gods. Such claims to ownership have been called piracy by activists such as Shiva. CA is clear that such ownership should be limited and biased toward the poor but they do not claim that the ownership itself should not exist.

God's ownership of the earth calls for limits on human ownership. Such has been the case in the past as both secular and biblical history shows. 'In the hunter gatherer society... such property as there is, is held in common.' (Gorringer 1994, 115) Private property was a later invention. It only occurred 'with settlement and the division of labour, with the production of surplus, and with conquest.' (115) The experiences of Israel in relation to property in the Old Testament can also underline what God's ownership of the earth implies.

- The first period was that of emerging from slavery in Egypt reflected in Deuteronomy, as discussed previously. As slaves, the property of others, the Israelites looked forward to God's new earth where all resources would be equally shared.
- The second period was that of the Judges. There 'the tribes divided the land among themselves' with 'no absolute rights to private property. (116) Land was for the common good because only God could claim ownership.
- The third period, the monarchy, changed the relationship to land. The kings claimed ownership of the land and collected taxes from those who worked the land. The richest grew richer, the poor poorer, and the prophets criticised this inequality. 'Their palaces and all that which makes them into a class different from the rest of

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<sup>20</sup> Cargill is a family-owned Canadian corporation and 'accounts for over 60 per cent of world trade in cereals.' (Lang and Hines 1993, 35)

the population are for Amos concretized oppression.’ (Miranda 1977, 20) Although the poor still had access to the land, the monarchy reaped the profits from it. Later, in Jesus’ time the Roman law of property won the day. Ownership came to mean ‘the unrestricted right of control over something.’ (Gorringe 1994, 119) Private property continues to be defended within Christianity today, as the poor no longer have access to the land of the rich.

From an ecological perspective, the lack of limits, alongside the assumption of human ownership of the earth, is causing destruction. ‘Far from being the expression of a primitive world view, the growing ecological crisis shows that endless killing and taking possession, the rapacity of capitalism does in fact bring disaster, not only on those who practise it but on the whole planet.’ (Gorringe 1994, 117) Treating the earth as property to be exploited by humans has caused serious damage. Treating it as God’s, to be shared amongst all humans, could change the situation. Such a suggestion coincides with post-development, which argues that the concept of extensive private space must be rejected.

Further, property has to be considered from the perspective of community. The notion of property implies a particular relationship between human beings. Property separates people from full community, as CEAS emphasises. ‘I am only rich or poor, a possessor or indigent, in relation to others.’ (Gorringe 1994, 127) If there were no other people around, then property would not be an issue. ‘Taking the social function of property seriously certainly means limits to individual property and therefore to the freedom of the individual to do whatever he or she likes.’ (127) The idea of human freedom does not mean that one person has more right to a piece of property than another.

At its base, considering one person to have ownership of a piece of land denies justice. Because only God can own the land, the poor should have equal access to it. Liberation theologians reject the idea of distinguishing ownership, which is used to call for charity rather than justice. Property is not owned by the rich for them to be charitable with. Instead, it should belong to all in common and be shared justly.

While a CA quote introduced this section, analysis of God’s ownership of the earth only appears in occasional texts. It does not form a prominent part of CA’s discussion. Differences emerge here between CA, Gorringe, and other theologians. For example, God’s ownership of the earth is not always linked to the Sabbath and Jubilee legislation. Instead, ‘creation, ownership, and stewardship’ can be emphasised. (Finn 1996, 47) The world was created by God but is taken care of by humans. ‘The

giftedness of the world implies a relation of intentionality between God and the earth's inhabitants.' (49) The call for equal access to the earth's resources is sometimes set aside in favour of the need to steward what is given by God.

In this view, individuals must take care of that property entrusted to them personally. Stewardship, will lead to sustainability. 'Because Christians understand that the world is God's creation, their relation to that world must respect the Creator's purposes for it.' (Finn 1996, 68) Humanity has to use the world as God intended. Because people in the North are stewarding more resources than people in the South, they have a greater responsibility to ensure that those resources are used justly. Those who are wealthier should work toward justice, but justice, in this view, does not necessarily include giving up their riches or consuming less.

- **The Eucharist: Model for consuming reverently**

'Identity in today's society... is no longer given by ethnicity, class, gender or social status. People find out who they are or who they want to be, by consumption.' (Sedgwick<sup>21</sup> 1999, 109)

What action does God require from the rich? If there is no overall agreement that the wealthy should give up their riches, do they at least need to consume ethically? It is clear that at CA there is a focus on the economy and within the economy on trade and consumption. Yet, there has not been specific theological reflection on consumption. This focus on consumption, for Gorringer, comes from the argument that human beings are natural consumers. The desires of the human heart, according to Aristotle, are infinite and corporations believe they are answering that desire. Through the trade campaign, CA does not encourage less consumption but encourages consumers to use their economic power to consume wisely and ethically.

There are those who argue that consumerism will not disappear and thus, its effects should be modified, just as CA argues that globalisation should be modified rather than rejected. 'We need to find a new context for consumerism, which preserves the concern for identity and relationships, but puts them in a transformed reality of transcendence, wider social relationships and services of others as well as self.' (Sedgwick 1999, 138) People need to be able to counter the unceasing impersonal accumulation advocated by the global economy, by recognising relationships in trading, a suggestion that can further deepen the discussion of community.

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<sup>21</sup> Peter Sedgwick is a theologian and assistant secretary on the Board for Social Responsibility of the Church of England.

The Eucharist, at the centre of Christian community, provides a model for consumption in community. While CA does not reflect on this concept, it is suggested by Gorringer and others as a means of moving the reflection on wealth forward. CEAS and liberation theologians too consider the Eucharist as a model for life in community today, although the discussion expands beyond consumption. The ‘link between ‘daily bread’ and the bread of the eucharist (sic) illustrates the inseparable connection between the divine economy and the secular economy.’ (van Drimmelen<sup>22</sup> 1998, xii) There is no question of treating the global economy, and consumption in particular, as solely secular.

The spiritual and material realms are once again intertwined, as with the understanding of God’s new earth. Jesus linked both together through the celebration of the Eucharist.

‘The offertory sentence now affirms: Blessed are you, Lord of the Universe who gives us this bread, fruit of the earth and work of human hands. It will become for us the bread of life.’  
(Gorringer 1997, 36)

In order for Christians to be able to eat the bread and drink the wine of the Eucharist these materials have to be produced. The Eucharist is made by human hands in the current global economy. The creation of the bread and wine requires labour and then the selling and buying of the products in the marketplace. Christians cannot partake of the bread and wine in a separate spiritual context. ‘The bread of the eucharist is the bread of the economy. The liturgy is inescapably enmeshed in ‘the real world’ of the world economy.’ (36) If the economic and the sacred are intertwined in the Eucharist, they can also be seen as intertwined in daily life in community.

In the God and the Global Economy workshop, Gorringer quoted a passage from the Book of Common Prayer, where following the consecration of communion the leftovers must be ‘reverently consumed.’ The bread and wine are sacred and must not simply be discarded but consumed with reverence. As the bread and wine of the Eucharist, made and distributed through the global economy, are to be treated reverently, so too could all matter and all economic interaction. ‘Certainly a faith that meets God in bread and wine is called to remarkable wonder and gratitude of heart for all material blessings.’ (Cullinan 2003, 8) The bread and wine of the Eucharist bind the Christian community together, providing an example for how humans can reverence and share matter in community. Both concepts are detailed further in the following chapter.

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<sup>22</sup> Robert van Drimmelen is general secretary of the Association of WCC-Related Development Organizations in Europe.

Christians, then, should take as much care over all their consumption as they do over the Eucharist because the material and the spiritual are intertwined. 'The Spirit breathes through, animates, and indwells matter, both the bread, wine and their own bodies' (Gorringe 1994, 15) The Holy Spirit moves through all matter, not just the bread and wine of the Eucharist. This reverent consumption of all matter is one way to ensure the recovering of limits. People do not need to be 'galloping greedy consumers,' Gorringe stated. They can be reverent consumers, in opposition to the urging of the global capitalist economy.

Four further components of the Eucharist, compliment the call for reverence in consumption. First, the Eucharist is not complete with one individual. It is communion, a means of forming community. 'The eucharist (sic) exemplifies the cooperation between God and us for our sustenance.' (van Drimmelen 1998, xii) When one person consumes, they do so in community, and with God. The Eucharist is an example of this. There cannot be trade and consumption without human relationships.

Second, this consumption of the Eucharist is not limited to those with money. 'All are invited freely to this meal.' (Meeks 1989, 179) Everyone shares in the consumption equally. The Eucharist is just, pointing toward the coming of God's new earth.

Thirdly, this just sharing prioritises the poor. Participating in the Eucharist includes being aware 'of all those others who are also invited to share the meaning of all social goods through Christ's body, namely, the poor, the oppressed, the sinners, and the dying.' (Meeks 1989, 179) No one is to be excluded in the Christian community, a concept further explored in the following chapter.

Finally, this just community should extend beyond the boundaries of the Eucharist to Christians in their daily lives. As the Eucharist does not rely on money, could the economy, or society in general, possibly rely on something other than money? 'Human need, when connected with money as the depository of value as such, justifies dominative and exploitative relationships as natural.' (Meeks 1989, 168) Such relationships of domination do not exist in the Eucharist. God's body and blood are shared freely with all; there is no system whereby one is entitled to more than another. The final section in this chapter considers the structures of the world economy in terms of the worship of money (Mammon) and how Christians are to respond to structures (principalities and powers) that idolise money.

### 3.4 Are structures (like TNCs and the WTO) sinful, and if so, how can they be redeemed?

- Mammon

‘Money only works while people trust it to, and nobody can trust it to work if they do not believe others will continue to trust it to do so. ... At some point... , the faith we place in money becomes something more than the trust we put in the instruments of our everyday life..., or the trust we rightly place in our fellow human beings, and becomes more like the trust which I believe belongs to God alone.’ (Selby 1998, 76)

CA theological reflection briefly mentions the idolatry of Mammon (money) but does not develop an analysis of structures, although structures are the main focus of the trade campaign. Instead, the theological reflection remains focused on individuals. Consumption has taken on God-like proportions, according to Dudley. There is a choice to be made between God and Mammon. However, no direct link is made with CA policy. Instead, idolatry is suggested as a potential way to reflect on the emphasis on money and profit in the market within the context of the trade campaign. Such reflection could build on that conducted during the debt campaign, shown by the quote from Selby that introduced this section.

When humans put their trust in money before God, that is idolatry. Idolatry is the giving of power over to something other than God.

‘More and more, the signs are that money comes to be seen as the saviour from a dangerous future, and as the judge between courses of action in the present. Saviour and Judge. Are not these the attributes of Jesus Christ, and only of him? Is not what we see a process that can only be called the divinisation of money? (Selby 1998, 76)

Instead of hoping for and working toward God’s new earth, where money will not rule, money is looked to as the answer to the problem of injustice in this world. Can money be trusted to bring about a new earth? Should humanity place its trust in money above God?

The idolatry of money destroys community, a central characteristic of the struggle for justice. ‘In the Bible, choosing idols over God leads to the destruction of community, the environment and human life.’ (Dudley 2000b, 4) This concept is central to liberation theology; a just community cannot include the idolatry of money. Community can ‘be lost when persons put their trust in a ‘thing of the body,’ ... by

acquiring wealth motivated by love of money...' (Hinkelammert<sup>23</sup> 1986, 232) A community has to worship God alone. Liberation theologians consider idolatry to develop in the domination of human beings by one another, a concept impacting CEAS' practice in community.

To reflect on the question of money emerging from the trade campaign, the Churches team developed a Lent Bible Study course: *For Love or Money*. (Dudley and Graystone 2000) Throughout the book, no direct statements about policy implications or theological conclusions are made. Instead, questions are posed and examples are given. The theology remains implicit as the goal of the study was to stimulate reflection.

One section discussed spending, asking:

'Should 'seeking the Lord while he may be found' change the way we spend money? Is it ever right to buy something luxurious or frivolous? (Dudley and Graystone 2000, 22)

The session suggests that before spending money during the following week, certain questions can be posed:

'Is this purchase Selfish, or made with the needs of others in mind? Has this been an Honest purchase- for both seller and buyer? Is there anything Oppressive about this- will people or animals be harmed by it?' Have I been Persuaded into something that will prevent me using the money in another way?' (25)

No answers to the above questions are provided. Instead, the following verse is quoted:

'Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal... For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.' (Matthew 6: 19-21)

The question remains as toward what sort of policies such questions and verses could lead. The course focuses on the relationship between individuals and money and does not consider structures.

CA reflection, so far, has been clearly opposed to prosperity theology, which celebrates buying and selling in the marketplace. Such theology prioritises money above the poor. In contrast, Gorringer and liberation theologians not only reject putting profit before people but also reject profit and growth altogether. CA policy is less clear that there is a decision to be made between profit and people.

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<sup>23</sup> Franz Hinkelammert is an economist and contributor to the development of liberation theology.

For Dudley, structures have idolised themselves by putting their interests before God. Similar questions are asked of CA itself by some of the supporters. They argue that CA should be a just structure, which included being honest about whether they were putting money first. Is CA being driven by the market? CA's strategic framework does seem to be. CA wants to be able to raise £100 million a year by 2009 in comparison with the £60 million per year they are currently collecting. (Christian Aid 2003) Thus, growth, the accumulation of money, is central to CA's future plans. Does CA put God first or the market first? In a recent SCAC committee meeting, one board member suggested that the term 'shareholder' could be used to describe the role of board members and church members of CA. Economic terminology is becoming more prominent. The question of idolatry can be posed to individuals, communities, and structures, including CA, as the supporters make clear.

In the God and the Global economy workshop, Gorringer also expanded the discussion of idolatry to structures. 'To place idolatry at the centre of ethical analysis acknowledges that sin is not manifest only, or indeed primarily, in individual lives, but in structures which determine and dehumanise us all.' (Gorringer 2001, 134) Structures no longer follow the command in Matthew 28: 19, 20: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.' Corporations want people to be baptised in the name of Mammon, not in the name of God, which is sinful. Christian communities struggle with these structures because the structures no longer worship God. 'While questioning a system's economic and political structures, we must always ask what in fact 'functions' as God.' (Duchrow 1995, 205) In the capitalist system, God has been replaced by money.

How has this shift occurred? Where human beings were formerly treated as persons, they are now 'things.' Oppositely, an idea has turned into a 'thing,' which is now treated as a person, central to society. (Althaus-Reid 2000a, 48) In this case, the thing, which has become a person, is money. 'These 'persons' have been considered in Liberation Theology to be idols.' (48) Instead, of people having control over the economic system, the economic system controls people. The current economic system excludes people and finds this to be acceptable. The global economic system itself is never excluded because of its treatment of human beings, although Gorringer and CEAS argue that it should be.

At the same time, individuals and communities idolise the system through their participation in it. People give their power over to the global capitalist economy itself. This system assumes that:

- ‘money is the most important value’;
- ‘the possession of money is a sign of worth’; and
- ‘the production of material goods is more important than the production of healthy and normal people.’ (Gorringe 2000a, 93<sup>24</sup>)

Money is the ultimate goal of the neoliberal capitalist economy. Citizens need access to money in order to be able to participate in the economy. Power then centres not with citizens in the political realm but with money in both the economic and political realms.

The focus on acquiring more and more money is specific to a capitalist system and is in contrast to pre-capitalist societies. ‘In premodern societies, people worked to survive. In capitalist societies, people live to accumulate wealth.’ (Sung 2002, 107).

There is no exception to this rule in the global capitalist economy.

Why was there this shift to unlimited greed and unlimited growth? In capitalism, ‘market-minded people do not strive to satisfy their limited needs for survival.’ (Duchrow 1995, 55) Scarcity becomes a key concept. Fearing death, they ‘seek to fulfil their unlimited, artificial desires.’ (55) Consumption becomes crucial and because resources are scarce competition between individuals for those scarce resources also becomes crucial. The individual becomes the focus, destroying community in the process. Individuals aim toward unlimited consumption.

This idolatry of Mammon does not mean that the WTO, IMF, TNCs, and other organisations are irretrievably evil, as the following section details. However, they are sinning, having forgotten their God-given purpose.

‘They are good in that we need mechanisms by which people can be clothed, housed and fed, and by which human ingenuity can be channelled for the common good. They are fallen in that they are used for the profit of the few.’ (Gorringe 2000a, 94)

They could be mechanisms for equality, if they would reject the profit motive, choosing to serve God not Mammon. They need to recognise that possessions exist for the common good and not for private gain. For Gorringe, structures cannot simply be reformed; they have to give up their focus on profit, which will change them fundamentally.

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<sup>24</sup> Gorringe is quoting Walter Wink, a professor of biblical interpretation. 1992. *Engaging the Powers*, Fortress Press, p. 95.

The choice is between life and death: God is the way of life and Mammon is the way of death. One can trust an 'illusory god, who presents himself as the only powerful being,' or trust 'God, who is so humble as to identify with slaves and with poor widows.' (Duchrow 1995, 234) The choice has to be made; it is not optional.

For Gorringe, this is the decisive ethical issue facing the church, and CA too, today. 'As an advocate of life,' the church has to be 'a resistance movement against death.' (Gorringe 1994, 141). In the God and the Global economy workshop, Gorringe quoted I Kings 18 with Elijah and the prophets of Baal: "How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.' The people did not answer him a word.' When asked the question 'whom do you serve?' the churches are not prepared to answer, thereby choosing death.

The choice of money is the way of death. This way emphasises greed, leading to the destruction of community. This way is identified with idolatry. Mammon does not have to rule the exchange of money. 'Money is in origin a token, a means to aid exchange.' (Gorringe 1999, 85) However, it has long been treated as an entity in and of itself. 'Investments in stocks and shares has, of course, always been a gamble, morally justified by the goods and employment it made possible.' (86) Initially, the idea of investing money in business was that it helped to provide employment and the generation of products. Yet this is no longer the case. 'Traders on the world stock market now bet on the rise and fall of prices and the likely future price of commodities.' (86) Money is traded for its own sake, as people guess what money will achieve in the future.

Today's system has chosen death. There is 'an unconditional belief in the generation of wealth as the answer to all problems,' according to Gorringe. Money is seen as the way toward a new earth. Yet following the way of death, endangers life. 'Where life is threatened the question of life becomes the question of justice.' (Gorringe 1994, 13) A focus on money will not reintroduce justice.

What then is the way of life? It is justice in community, including 'faithfulness to YHWH... egalitarianism and care for the neighbour.' (Gorringe 1994, viii) This choice emphasised in Deuteronomy is revitalised by Jesus. Jesus 'rejects the whole system of Temple taxes and Temple economy.' (Duchrow 1995, 189) He then sets up an alternative, exemplified through the early Christian communities who continued to share their resources. In these communities, there is no inequality. 'In the household' too, slavery should be 'abolished on principle'; even 'the most subtle' domination, 'between men and women, is done away with.' (197-8) Thus, the worship of God leads to

upholding equality at the local level. This equality expands to include a rejection of any form of domination.

In the way of life, work does not have to focus on money. Society has been and can be based in community. With mutuality, a fisherman gives fish and the recipient may give some eggs in return but only if able to do so. In reciprocity, the fisherman gives fish when it is reciprocated with eggs. However, the eggs will still come when the fishing is bad. In bartering, the formula becomes set with perhaps one fish for three eggs. But then there comes rigidity, 'if I have fish to trade but you don't want eggs, we cannot do business.'<sup>25</sup> (McIntosh 2001, 30) Thus enters money.

When community is prioritised the discussion moves away from profit. Oppositely, when profit is prioritised the discussion moves away from community. Those involved in post-development and localisation suggest basing an economy on the 'person in community' rather than on 'competing individuals.' CEAS too works from this perspective.

Secular practitioners also distinguish between the choice of life or death.

Following out the

'deadly tale inspired by the basic precepts of Newtonian physics' has 'led to the embrace of money as the defining value of contemporary societies and given birth to a hedonistic ethic of material self-gratification; the hierarchical, control-oriented megainstitutions of the state and the corporation; and an economic system that rewards greed and destroys life.' (Korten 1999, 9-10)

This story of competition turned out to be the wrong one. The new story says that 'the universe is a self-organizing system engaged in the discovery and realization of its possibilities through a continuing process of transcendence toward ever higher levels of order and self-definition.' (12) Instead of emphasising death, it emphasises life. 'The power of death gives way to the living power of creation in all its splendor, unity, and diversity.' (13) This system is based on co-operation in community.

The example of usury, the practice of collecting interest, shows how the choice of life, the worship of God above money, can impact policy. Money should not be able to make more money from itself. 'Trading life for money is a bad bargain because it is life, and life alone, that gives money its value.' (Korten 1999, 55-6) This distinction is not recognised in capitalism. Yet in early Christian traditions, usury was considered to

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<sup>25</sup> Alistair McIntosh, a Scottish activist on issues of ecology and community, explains how his own community's economy worked when he was young.

be a sin. Those theologians who emphasise the choice between God and Mammon argue that usury remains sinful. ‘Only where there has been real loss through lending should there be payment of damages... although it would be better to write off the whole debt.’ (Duchrow 1995, 222) The practice of interest should end. Such a change would have enormous implications for policy on trade and the global economy in general.

While the theological reflection on structures at CA tends to discuss only the idolatry of Mammon, consideration of the wider context of principalities and powers could contribute to the analysis.

- **Principalities and powers**

‘For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.’ (Ephesians 6:12)

With this scripture Gorringer began his talk at the God and the Global Economy workshop. For him, it was the starting point of the discussion of the global economy. For CA, it emerges only briefly in the discussions and mainly in response to Gorringer’s focus on this issue. In particular, CA staff members cite Walter Wink’s<sup>26</sup> analysis, used throughout this section.

It is clear from the previous section that CA acknowledges that today’s global structures rely on money. One of CA’s goals is to challenge the structures and systems that are keeping people poor and marginalised. These structures include governments, the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, TNCs, and CA. CA specifically targets two structures through its trade campaign: the WTO and TNCs.

From the debates amongst CA staff members, it appears that their understanding of the global economy is that the current structures of trade and globalisation are sinful but redeemable. They often return to the condemnation of the system by the prophets in the Old Testament. If structures are sinful because they are prioritising profit, then they can be redeemed by prioritising the poor.

The theological reflection at CA is limited to questioning the structure of the market itself. Principalities and powers are not central to the discussions.

‘In Genesis 2, life collapses when something or someone claims the ‘knowledge of good and evil,’ ‘this is what the free market

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<sup>26</sup> Walter Wink is Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Auburn Theological Seminary in New York City.

does. It claims competence to decide all issues, other than the private and personal. It 'knows' what is good for society, it has the 'knowledge of good and evil.' (Dudley 2000b<sup>27</sup>)

People give their power over to the global market system, accepting that it distinguishes between good and evil, when it clearly cannot.

The market system does not trust God. Thus, how should CA react to it? 'We affirm by ancient church tradition that God's is the power and the glory forever: God will ultimately transform the world so that God's will 'is done on earth as it is in heaven.'" (Dudley 2002, 7) God will bring in the new earth; God's power will rule in this just new earth, not the market's power. What is CA to do about the global structures in the meantime?

CA has called the structures evil as the quote at the very beginning of the first section of this chapter shows. Yet, they do not argue that the structures have to be rejected. For Gorringer and many others involved in localisation and post-development, yes, there has to be a distinct choice between profit and the priority of the poor. What does this mean for practice? What are the principalities and powers and how should CA treat them?

Principalities and powers are the structures that guide daily life. Stackhouse describes several:

- Mammon: that which governs 'a viable economy in order to provide the food, shelter, clothing and opportunity for work and property for people to survive.' (Stackhouse 2000a, 37)
- Mars: the political 'system of gaining, legitimating and using coercive authority to control violence.' (37)
- Eros: 'an ordered way of dealing with human sexuality, interpersonal relationships,' etc. (37)
- The Muses provide 'a means for communicating information, thought, feeling...and conviction.' (37)
- Religion: 'an identifying center of being, meaning, and morality that bonds people and the powers together in a shared system.' (38)

For Stackhouse, the principalities and powers are the spiritual aspects of the guiding institutions; thus he uses the names Mammon and Mars. However, for Wink, Gorringer, CA and others, they are spiritual and material aspects: the institutions guiding the economic, political, religious and other realms. The importance of Stackhouse's list for

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<sup>27</sup> Dudley is quoting West, a CA regional staff member.

this discussion is that it expands out the discussion beyond the economic realm. CA discusses idolatry solely in terms of Mammon, because the focus by CA, other mainstream development practitioners, and the Northern world in general at the moment is on the economic system. However, as the following chapter will show, CEAS acknowledges that questions of power exist in each realm and focuses on addressing them in local communities.

Merging the discussion of the idolatry of Mammon with that of principalities and powers immediately expands the area of focus out from individuals. 'These opposing forces are not sinful individuals. They are corporate realities... (which) would include International Financial Institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization.' (Taylor 2000, 48-9) Thus, the organisations central to CA's trade campaign can be understood in terms of principalities and powers. What characteristics do these organisation then share?

The principalities and powers are the institutions and the spirit within these institutions. 'Every Power tends to have a visible pole, an outer form- be it a church, a nation, or an economy- and an invisible pole, an inner spirit or driving force that animates, legitimates, and regulates its physical manifestation in the world.' (Wink 1984, 5) Just as God's kingdom is both spiritual and material, and justice has spiritual and material components, so too do the 'kings' of this world have spiritual and material aspects.

These economic powers have become idolatrous because they put Mammon ahead of God. For Gorringer, the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of such companies are clear in stating that they believe wealth equals having money to create and participate in the infrastructure of a Western style of living. Human beings set up the system over time, giving it power, culminating in the creation of neoliberal capitalism in the West. Principalities and powers are the 'sedimentation of human choices of power... built up over hundreds of years.' (Gorringer 2000a, 36-7) Although the powers have resulted from individual and cumulative human choices, the situation is now far more complicated.

There are two central characteristics to these principalities and powers. First, the system is now bigger than the sum of its parts. 'When we discuss the powers, we are reflecting about that dimension of evil, far transcending the ability of any individual to counter, from which human beings need to be saved.' (Gorringer 2000a, 90). There is something more to the structure of power than the people who make it up.

To try to avoid the system requires non-participation on the part of individuals and such behaviour is punished. 'The world is currently in a 'domination system,' 'because human affairs can be mapped by the struggle for domination.' (Gorringe 2000a, 91) This domination system sees the exercise of power as 'power over.' CEAS, with its focus on sharing power in community, counters this trend.

Secondly, and crucially, these principalities and powers have both spiritual and material aspects. Wink states that 'these Powers are both heavenly and earthly, divine and human, spiritual and political, invisible and structural.' (Wink 1984, 11) There is the physical institution and then there is a spiritual element. These elements can be distinguished from each other. 'As the inner aspect they are the spirituality of institutions, the 'within of corporate structures and systems, the inner essence of outer organizations of power.' (5) This spiritual aspect, however, cannot be treated separately from the physical aspect. 'As the outer aspect they are political systems, appointed officials, the 'chair' of an organization, laws- in short, all the tangible manifestations which power takes.' (5) However, neither begets the other; both exist together and should be treated together.

In responding to the principalities and powers, agencies like CA have to take both aspects into account. If only the spiritual aspect of principalities and powers is addressed, their attempt at change will fail. 'These 'Powers' do not... have a separate, spiritual existence. We encounter them primarily in reference to the material or 'earthly' reality of which they are the innermost essence.' (Wink 1984, 105) If only the physical aspect is targeted, on the other hand, there will also be failure. There cannot be a dualistic approach. 'We can now regard matter and spirit as united in one indivisible reality, distinguishable in two discrete but interrelated manifestations.' (Wink 1984, 107) CA and other agencies that merge the spiritual and the secular are perfectly placed to address these powers.

Not fully understanding these two characteristics could lead to failure in terms of effectively dealing with the principalities and powers. For example, 'we look at capitalism... only as if it were an economic system: a body without a soul... meanwhile we ignore the 'spirit of capitalism'... It does not occur to us to convert this enormous institution to a different set of values and commitments...' (Taylor 2000, 50) Yet, this is precisely what has to occur. 'The spiritual and physical aspects of the Powers ... (are) inseparable but distinguishable components of a single phenomenon- power in its concretions in this world.' (Wink 1984, 106) Once it is acknowledged that the

principalities and powers have spiritual and material aspects then the question is raised as to how they should be tackled and what the goal of the change should be.

Further reflection on Wink is useful in this regard. According to Wink, the principalities and powers were created by God to serve God. As the previous section analysed with regard to Mammon, the powers no longer serve God; they are sinning. Thus, they need to be redeemed.

What was their original purpose? 'Their purpose in Christ is to be 'for' Christ, to serve that end in and through and for which they were created.' (Wink 1984, 65) They should be struggling toward the new earth. These powers then are not inherently evil. 'If the Powers have been created by God in and through and for Christ, then they cannot be wholly demonized.' (64) Yet, they are sinning. 'When a particular Power becomes idolatrous, placing itself above God's purposes for the good of the whole, then that power becomes demonic.' (5) They are idolising Mammon.

So how can the powers be redeemed? 'The church's task is to unmask this idolatry and recall the Powers to their created purposes in the world.' (Wink 1984, 5) The powers are not to be rejected as irretrievably evil. 'Christians are to be subject to the powers, to honour and respect them, because they have been established by God and derive their authority, whether they recognize this or not, from him.' (Forrester 1989, 71) In order not to sin through participation in the system, Christians have to work toward redeeming the system.

The principalities and powers can be transformed. They can follow the example set by Jesus. 'The words and deeds of Jesus reveal that he is not a minor reformer but an egalitarian prophet who repudiated the very premises of the Domination System: the right of some to lord it over others by means of power, wealth, shaming, or titles.' (Wink 1998, 65) Jesus wanted power to be shared in community and set the possibility in motion.

Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, described in the first section of this chapter, showed how the principalities and powers react to the possibility of being transformed. 'Pilate reminds him (Jesus): 'Do you not know that I have power to release you, and power to crucify you?' (John 19:10) Jesus replies that this power of Pilate's is 'from above', that it comes from God, that Pilate is responsible to God.' (Forrester 1988, 18) Although Pilate did not find Jesus guilty of any crime, he was still executed. The principalities and powers saw a challenge to their authority and tried to end it. Yet, God overcame the powers.

This interpretation of Jesus' death and resurrection is not the one most frequently used today. So why did it change over time? This condemnation of the principalities and powers cooled when Christianity became intertwined with the ruling system in the fourth century. 'Called on to legitimate the empire, the church abandoned much of its social critique. The Powers were soon divorced from political affairs... the state was thus freed of one of the most powerful brakes against idolatry.' (Wink 1984, 113) Christians then changed the emphasis of the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. The church 'took the Powers off the hook' and 'argued that God is the one who provided Jesus as a Lamb,... that God is the angry and aggrieved party who must be placated.' (Wink 1998, 87) The principalities and powers were removed from the crucifixion story. 'Rather than God triumphing over the Powers through Jesus' nonviolent self-sacrifice on the cross, the Powers disappear from discussion.' (87) This understanding remains prominent today. Christians have to re-establish the call for justice, struggling against the unjust principalities and powers.

Solidarity and resistance by local communities can help to redeem the principalities and powers. 'Confronting such a regime and recalling it to its true role is a special responsibility for Christians because they alone have a knowledge of the christological foundation and the divine mandate of the state.' (Forrester 1989, 72) This requires action in the socio-political and spiritual realms.

In the workshop, Gorringer provided the example of the miners, many of whom died early in this century fighting for the rights of workers. Today's struggle also has to be rigorous. 'What is wrong with capitalism is that it is based on antagonism, between employers and employees, between capitalists, and therefore between nations, an antagonism which it is the function of pluralist rhetoric to disguise.' (Gorringer<sup>28</sup> 1994, 99) Co-operation, not competition should guide relations here. Competition separates people into individuals while co-operation rests on people acting together in community.

TNCs and other structures are not fundamentally evil. 'We must... affirm the dignity of the powers, their role in God's plan... the powers have a proper claim on respect, co-operation, obedience, prayers and criticism.' (Forrester 1989, 72) However, these structures do require fundamental changes.

'The global economy at present does not serve either the poor or the earth, and ... therefore we have to change it. Regulation of the type proposed at Rio could be one way of doing this but the

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<sup>28</sup> Gorringer is paraphrasing Herbert McCabe.

profit system as such would require so much reform you wouldn't recognise it afterwards.' (Gorringer 2002)

Gorringer would want TNCs to follow God instead of Mammon. CA does not go this far, requiring only regulation to reduce poverty, not challenging the basic workings of the economy. While CA, Gorringer and others are clear that structures can be redeemed, there is not universal agreement over what redemption entails.

Christian communities can provide a model toward which the structures can aim. 'Christianity is deeply subversive of capitalism, because it announces the 'improbable possibility that men (sic) might live together without war; neither by domination nor by antagonism but by a unity in love.' (Gorringer 1994, 99) Christianity is about co-operating to help bring about the new earth. These communities, which include the churches, can be examples of what the new earth will look like. Christian communities should point the way toward proper use of power. 'Opposed to the domination system is God's domination-free order, which is a world characterized by equality, holiness, the breaking down of ethnic and racial divisions, equality between the sexes, and thus the end of patriarchy, and non-violence.' (Gorringer 2000a, 92) A sharing of power in just community is the basis of God's new earth. CEAS provides a further example of communities aiming toward this just sharing of power.

This analysis of principalities and powers can contribute to the working of the hermeneutic circle at CA in three ways. First, it provides a way of understanding that while they principalities and powers are not inherently evil, they are sinning and must be redeemed. Like individuals, structures too can sin.

Second, it shows that 'even such demonic powers cannot finally or effectively overturn the purposes of God shown in Jesus Christ.' (Forrester 1988, 16) God's new earth will win in the end; in fact, God has already won. 'The principalities and powers have been disarmed, defeated, restored to their proper subordination to God.' (16) While the sinning principalities and powers may seem to be in charge, Christians can work toward the new earth with the confidence that it will come about.

Third, in working toward the new earth, Christians are not trying to introduce something completely alien to the principalities and powers. 'It involves simply reminding the Powers Whose they are, a knowledge already encoded in their charters, titles, traditions, insignia, and money.' (Wink 1984, 116) The powers are simply to be reminded that they are subject to God. This is an aspect often missing from the critiques provided.

Thus, this discussion can contribute to the emphasis already in place at CA on praying, acting and giving. 'We can reform or revamp the organization, elect better leaders, win equal rights for or as the disadvantaged, or even engage in revolution. But we cannot affect the inner, spiritual dimension of institutions directly.' (Wink 1984, 127) Working toward the new earth requires action but it also requires more. 'That is where faith and prayer come in. The issue... is not social struggle versus inner change, but their orchestration together so that both occur simultaneously.' (127) Addressing the spiritual and material aspects of the principalities and powers can deepen the discussion already in place at CA over the spiritual and material aspects of the new earth.

There is a tension remaining in both of these aspects of structures of power, the idolatry of Mammon and principalities and powers, between working toward the new earth and the fact that the Kingdom is not yet fully present that CA has not yet dealt with. Profit and inequality will not exist in the new earth but how far are Christians to go now in rejecting the system and setting up alternatives? For Stackhouse, it is not a problem for Mammon to guide the economy, but for Gorringer and others, if it is put before God, it is idolatry. The idolatry of Mammon means that the current global economic system is incompatible with Christianity. This seriousness is further shown by the prioritisation of the market over democracy, leading to the choice of consumption over citizenship. The following chapter considers one CA partner who rejects this prioritisation.

## A Note about Sources

Each of these sections began with CA sources and discussions and then broadened out to other theologians who clearly define the aspects of the new earth, its central goal of justice, and what justice requires. Theologians referred to by CA were then used to further expound the argument, to show where the discussions could be heading in terms of further action and reflection. The individual references to these theologians are critiqued in terms of their similarities to, differences with, and contradictions with the theological reflection of CA. The conclusion will point to ways forward for further critiques within the hermeneutic circle, as that is a task to be tackled in community, not by one theologian alone.

Gorringer is used throughout the chapter to contribute to the analysis, as he was actively engaged with theological reflection with CA at the time of the planning of the trade campaign. In particular, his presentation at the God and the Global Economy workshop is referenced, as the starting point for the analysis. CA engages with Gorringer directly and with his work in theological discussion, a situation that continued throughout the time of the fieldwork. This engagement does not mean that all staff members and supporters agreed with his thinking as certain sections highlight. However, it is important to show where his analysis is leading to allow CA to engage more fully with and to accept or critique his reflection further within the hermeneutic circle, particularly as he has presented theological reflection publicly in CA contexts. Further, his theological reflection and policy analysis coincide, whereas CA agrees with much of his theological reflection but holds sometimes conflicting policies. At several points, Gorringer's reflection on theology and policy are also similar to that of CEAS, as the fourth chapter notes.

For example, CA staff members and supporters felt that charity was to be subsumed within justice, that there should not be charity without justice. Such an analysis is also prominent within Gorringer and Miranda. The section then moves further through an analysis of Gorringer's work and presentations to see where such a characteristic could lead in practice. Further implementation of the hermeneutic circle at CA could either proceed along these lines or critique such an analysis and move in a difference direction toward other praxis. The conclusion will then tie together these points to offer possibilities for further engagement within the hermeneutic circle.

Liberation theologians, including Gutiérrez, Dussel, the Boffs, Camara, Sobrino, Hinkelammert, and Sung are referenced not only because they support CA's position but also because they speak to issues that are also raised in the partner context, as the

following chapter will detail. Not only were these writers mentioned directly by CA staff members, but their written work was also found in various places in CA throughout the fieldwork. In fact, this area of engagement with southern theologians was prominent in the work of the Ethics Officer before her position was removed.

Similarly, authors from the UK churches that own CA are often referred to, such as Sedgwick, Harries, and Selby. For example, Harries is used throughout as a counterpoint to CA discussion. He has engaged with CA as well but his analysis is not referred to directly by them and his points of engagement contradict CA's. Thus, his analysis is presented briefly to show the range of opinion with which CA is grappling in this hermeneutic circle.

In addition, staff members and associates of the World Council of Churches and *Kairos Europa* are referred to, such as Duchrow, van Drimmelen and Ucko. They have figured centrally in CA discussions, particularly Duchrow. Staff members have participated in conferences with Duchrow and have referenced his work. Email conversations show continued engagement, although this too has trailed off with the removal of the Ethics Officer.

Finally, several theologians associated with the University of Edinburgh are also used to comment on the discussion at CA. Through the previous association of CA with the MTh in Theology, Culture and Development, CA was able to engage with the work of theologians such as Forrester, Northcott, and Althaus-Reid. Reference continues to be made to their written work, although the university course is no longer associated with CA.

## In Conclusion

This chapter examined CA's theological reflection. This reflection focused on the reality analysed in the previous chapter. God's new earth forms the basis for this reflection on development and globalisation. The new earth is spiritual and material and requires human action alongside God's action to bring it about. While the new earth will be present fully in the future, it is also here now. Thus, its central values have to be worked toward now.

The end goal of CA's struggle is justice. Justice subsumes charity in its requirement that all humans share the earth's resources equally. Yet, as God's kingdom is not fully present, how far toward justice do Christians have to work?

Justice requires community to be prioritised over the individual. Building community begins with dwelling in community. It draws on the tradition established in the early Christian communities and transforms the current communities to those of God's new earth, which requires imagination.

In this focus on justice in community, the prioritisation of the economically poor is central. The poor are poor as a result of injustice. As Jesus prioritised the poor, so too should Christians.

To fully prioritise the poor, the rich have to give up their riches. The Sabbath and Jubilee legislation set limits on inequality. These limits reflected the fact that God owns the earth. Thus, any human claim on ownership leads to injustice. The Eucharist provides a model for restoring equality in community. The Eucharist, which intertwines the spiritual and material realms, has to be consumed reverently. This concept can be extended to all consumption and can be expanded beyond consumption.

Further, the focus on money in society can be seen as idolatrous. Structures and individuals worship money before God, trusting money to bring about a new earth. Money has changed from a unit of exchange to something that is treasured for itself. There has to be a choice between life and death: God brings life and Mammon brings death. The principalities and powers (structures) can turn away from this idolatry to work toward God's new earth.

Throughout this thesis, thus far, there has been little partner contribution to the reflection on reality and spirituality. In order to truly prioritise the poor, their voices have to be heard. It is to a Brazilian partner that we now turn for a critique of the policy of managed globalisation from a Southern faith-based perspective.

## Chapter Four: CEAS: Struggling Toward Just Community on the Ground in Salvador, Brazil

### Abstract

While the previous chapter merged CA reflection with that of some of its supporting churches, this chapter deals with one overseas partner separately as CA has no format in place for regular reflection with the overseas partners. CEAS provides one voice speaking to theology and policy from the Brazilian context where liberation theology emerged. CEAS works on the ground in the poorest communities of Salvador, Brazil. Its stated goal is to increase the power of local communities to make the government answerable to the needs of these communities. CEAS focuses on changing the structures to improve citizenship rather than consumption. This citizenship is addressed in community, not focused on individuals. The communities present their goals to CEAS, who then facilitates the process of achieving these goals.

CEAS analyses its place in the global economic and political system and moves forward from its faith base. To compare the situation to that of CA the following four questions are posed:

1. Do CEAS and the communities with which it associates follow the hermeneutic circle?

The two sections, Action and reflection at CEAS and The process of conscientization and action/reflection on Itaparica Island, answer this question through the foci of developing self-esteem to confront the structures of power and prioritising the community over the individual.

2. How does CEAS understand development and globalisation?

The next two sections, Development and globalisation as the continuation of colonialism and The focus on political structures: citizens not consumers, address this question.

3. How does this understanding impact praxis in communities?

Two further sections explore this question: A community's fight against *Via Náutica* and Itaparica Island: The beginnings of capacity-building.

4. What theological issues emerge from this process of action and reflection?

This question is addressed in the final section The Poor in Community as an Alternative to Structures of Sin, which considers the poor as the starting point for theology, sin in structures, conscientization for the sharing of power, the Eucharist as a model for community, and the process of action and reflection as a multi-faith process.

## An introduction to the Brazilian context

In Brazil, extreme economic wealth and poverty exist side by side. For example, the city of Salvador, in the Northeast of Brazil, has over 2,000,000 people making it the third largest city in the country. It has a petrochemical industry, a large civil service (frequently on strike), a university, and a hugely expanding tourist sector. (Kraay 1998) Yet, these sharply contrast with tracts of grinding poverty. People experience economic, political, and cultural life in diverse ways. Nearly 38 out of every 100,000 people in Salvador are murdered each year.<sup>1</sup> Half of the people in the state of Bahia have no access to clean water. Around 60% of Salvador's inhabitants live in informal (not legal) situations, rising to 73% if only habitable areas are considered. Gamboa's situation, described in the introduction, is not part of this statistic, as it is technically legal.

The poor and marginalised form the majority of Brazil's population, 60%.<sup>2</sup> They are excluded from the global capitalist economy. The next 34% of the population are considered the working class. (Eakin<sup>3</sup> 1997, 191) They work for minimum wage; this class is growing in Brazil. 'The organizational and political success of organized labor... (has) moved it closer to the middle class in economic terms.' (191) However, 70% of this working class do not belong to a union and thus they form almost 'an underclass with very little political force or power.'<sup>4</sup> (191) Nearly 94% of the population is effectively excluded from power over economic and political processes.<sup>5</sup>

The middle and elite classes make up only 6% of the population. The middle class is a vague term incorporating those who are neither elites, nor poor, nor working class. They have annual incomes about ten times the minimum wage with a home, at least one car, and children who attend private school. Some of the staff members at CEAS fit into this category.<sup>6</sup>

Tensions and violence arising from the enormous discrepancies between rich and poor frequently break through the veneer of normal daily life in the city of Salvador. At

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<sup>1</sup> These statistics come from CEAS.

<sup>2</sup> Only 60.5% of the population is employed in the state of Bahia. This statistic includes informal employment. Twenty-four percent of 10-14 year olds in Bahia work, much worse than the national average of 9.7%. Forty percent of those who work live in families who receive less than one half a minimum salary per capita: 180 reais per month (£60). (Guimarães 2001)

<sup>3</sup> Marshall Eakin is a professor of Latin American History at Vanderbilt University.

<sup>4</sup> The new president of Brazil, Luis Inácio da Silva, was instrumental in the promotion of unions and has been strongly supported by the working class. Thus, this situation could change.

<sup>5</sup> For further information on the class structure in Brazil, see Eakin 1997. For those who read Portuguese, see Costa 2002 for a recent analysis of class by a CEAS staff member.

<sup>6</sup> See Assies 1999 for further analysis of this awkward situation in community development.

the beginning of my stay, there was a police strike.<sup>7</sup> For the first week, there were simply no police on the streets, particularly noticeable in the tourist sections of the city where there is usually a visible police presence. Violence only began when the private security guards, who protect banks, shops, and residential buildings, also vacated their posts.

The situation of striking public sector workers is not unusual. Many groups go on strike for reasons ranging from cuts to social services, to the struggle for the rights and salaries of workers. Workers at the town offices had been on strike for 52 days before the police strike began. They continued with their strike after the police returned to work because their own demands were not met. Thus, there could be no civil weddings and other official certification during this time period.

The police strike began after the salary negotiators for the police service were arrested while in Brasilia, the capital, meeting with representatives from the federal government. (Neto 2001) The police took to the streets in protest, which the newspapers reported as a strike for a 100% rise in wages. The negotiators were in Brasilia to request higher wages; however, the strike was in response to the arrest of the negotiators. Demonstrating on the streets, the police wore masks, as any participants identified were suspended from duty. However, this masking meant the newspapers could depict them as bandits.

On Thursday, the 12<sup>th</sup> of July 2001, a state of panic ensued when the phones stopped working. Suddenly, no one was able to determine what was happening around the city. At lunchtime, a young boy rushed into the café area on the ground floor of my building to say that he had seen armed men get out of a car and raid a shop in the nearby square. With this, the doors and windows of the café were shut and locked no one was allowed in or out for the rest of the day.

That evening, the federal government decided to assign the army to patrol the streets in Salvador because banks and businesses had panicked and shut down. However, they were to be deployed from the south of the country, which meant they would not arrive before Saturday. With the complete shut down of the business sector of the city came 24 hours of looting and robberies. During the night, people looted an appliances shop at the bottom of a steep hill near my residence abandoning the larger items like refrigerators halfway up the hill and going back for the smaller appliances.

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<sup>7</sup> For a detailed study of relations between the police and civil society in Brazil, see Caldeira 2002: 'The Paradox of Police Violence in Democratic Brazil.'

Over the next few days, cut-price televisions and other appliances appeared on the streets.

Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup> of July, the business section of the city remained shut down with many people staying in their homes. In the poorer areas, however, life continued as normal, although without public transport. The majority of the population, the poor, were not affected by the shutdown of the business areas but it made the international news and was a crisis for the elite and middle classes. One CEAS staff member said it had actually been a relief for the Gamboa community because they knew that for a few days they did not have to worry about police attacks.



Figure Two: Brazilian soldiers on patrol in the city of Salvador.

The military arrived in Salvador to patrol the streets on Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup>. Over the next two days, shops reopened and tourists reappeared on the streets, as the military presence became more accepted. I was party to several conversations where people questioned whether this military presence would lead to a return to military government. The last time there had been tanks on the streets was in 1964 during the military coup; thus, it was a reminder of the past repression. There was also the question of whether there would be a clash between the military and the police, as with the return of calm on the streets their demands no longer seemed as urgent. However, on the 19<sup>th</sup> the strike was officially suspended with the release of the two police negotiators, although the end of the strike was reported in the media as due to a compromise over salary demands.

In this complex economic and political context, Christianity is a prominent feature. Seventy-five percent of Brazilians define themselves as Roman Catholic.<sup>8</sup> Another 20% consider themselves to be Protestant and mainly evangelical. The remaining 5% align themselves with the various strands of Afro-Brazilian religions, in Bahia's case mainly Candomblé. The Afro-Brazilian religions combine elements of Roman Catholicism with traditional African religions.<sup>9</sup> The religions that entered the country with the slaves merged with elements of Catholicism, as slaves were forced to practice Christianity. Thus, nearly the entire population identifies with some variant of Christianity and spiritual elements permeate political and economic discussions. Since this population is also predominantly poor, Christianity is located in communities of the poor.

CEAS is Jesuit-based and works with the poorest communities in and around the city of Salvador. The fieldwork focused on the urban team, as this is the part of the organisation which CA funds. Aside from the internal urban team work, two communities are detailed. The first, *Gamboá de Baixo* formed the excerpt in the introduction. The second, the Island of Itaparica, is a newer partner of CEAS, where a community of schoolteachers are focusing on relations between the schools and the local government. As an extension of the fieldwork, the writings in the journal produced by CEAS have also been analysed and contribute to this chapter.

CEAS remains small with 20 staff members, four of whom are Jesuits. The management of the organisation is rotated yearly and all staff members participate in the decision-making processes. Santa Rita, as current co-ordinator and pedagogue in the urban team, formed my main point of contact. She worked in both communities that are excerpted. However, no staff member is more central to the hermeneutic circle than any other. For example, Father Alfredo de Souza Dorea, although on sabbatical during the research, constantly provided theological reflection. In addition, dos Santos, the current head of the urban team, and Joaci de Souza Cunha, a rural team member, who has written and taught on many of the issues surrounding citizenship and globalisation, both contributed extensively to the process of action and reflection.

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<sup>8</sup> See [http://www.cesnur.org/testi/irf/irf\\_brazil99.html](http://www.cesnur.org/testi/irf/irf_brazil99.html) for further details.

<sup>9</sup> For further analysis of how these religions interact with and impact daily life in Brazil, see Brown 1986. However, this book was published only two years after the shift to democracy in Brazil. So it does not fully reflect this aspect.

# 1. Do CEAS and the Communities with Which It Associates Follow the Hermeneutic Circle?

## 1.1 Action and reflection at CEAS

As a first step in the hermeneutic circle, CEAS analyses reality from its own situation. For CEAS, the Brazilian government is exclusive, marginalising the poor. They want to be different, inclusive. They use a method, which the head of the urban team describes as *andade*, walking with the groups. A similar concept is also used in Brazil and Latin America to describe the relationship with Jesus in the Christian walk, *caminhada*. As Tiongco pointed out, doing theology and doing development both involve the practice of action and reflection. CEAS in this *andade* has two goals:

- Social transformation for justice and
- to work with the most marginalised people.

As with CA the main goal of the struggle is justice. To achieve this transformation they focus on issues of conscientization and capacity-building to confront structures of economic and political power. Thus, the discussion of the struggle toward a new earth is expanded out from the economic realm to consider the political realm.

How does CEAS define the poor? The poor include all of those people who are excluded or marginalised, made powerless by race, ethnicity, gender, religion, economics, and politics. The poor are all who lack the power to participate in community. In Brazil's case the poor are excluded from the economy, as they have no money to consume, and they are excluded from the political process, as the government is unresponsive to the communities, although it is a democracy.

Those who are poor do not ask 'who are the poor,' however.

'This question is often posed by those who cannot really be counted among the poor. ... when those who are actually poor (lacking the means to sustain life) discuss the question, they easily come to an objective assessment of the situation and of specific remedies that would liberate them from their situation of dehumanizing poverty.' (Boff and Boff 1987, 46)

For CEAS, the poor already know their rights but they need to be mobilised and their capacity to articulate proposals has to be built. Thus, as an organisation CEAS prioritises the poor to the extent that the poor communities define their own goals. These communities see the misery and begging, the complete lack of prospects, the destruction of public education, the health care system, and welfare, which requires justice, not charity. In fact, charity is never mentioned.

The global economic system does not recognise this exclusion, which creates ‘non-persons.’ Thus, this global system cannot be supported. For the Boffs, ‘the gospel is... aimed chiefly... at ‘nonpersons,’ those whose basic dignity and rights are denied them.’ (Boff and Boff 1987, 8) It is the priority of the excluded that is crucial to the Christian faith.

‘Reflecting on the basis of practice, within the ambit of the vast efforts made by the poor and their allies, seeking inspiration in faith and the gospel for the commitment to fight against poverty and for the integral liberation of all persons and the whole person- that is what liberation theology means.’ (8)

Thus, liberation theology urges the inclusion of those excluded. Theology and praxis cannot be separated.

CEAS wants to organise base communities and to strengthen these communities to pressure the governments on issues of sanitation, living, and generation of work and income.

‘The policy objective of the Executive was to renew and to move CEAS forward boldly and firmly, in spite of rough seas, in loyalty to its mission and practice, consolidated through more than 30 years of action with the urban and rural popular sectors, nurturing also the belief in an egalitarian society.’<sup>10</sup> (CEAS 2001h, 36)

What praxis will achieve this new society, this new earth? For CEAS, it is largely political. There is an opportunity in the democratic political system to create equal and effective participation. They aim to build citizenship.

Twice a year, each of the teams within CEAS presents its work to the rest of the organisation, including interested board members, for reflection. At the urban team reflection day, the main question was

‘in what manner does the work developed by the urban team help CEAS to achieve its objectives (or not)?’<sup>11</sup> (CEAS 2001g)

They constantly place their action under suspicion, a crucial component of the hermeneutic circle. There are three overall goals of the urban team:

1. The formation of space for the poor in the public (political) realm;
2. The articulation of groups; and

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<sup>10</sup> ‘O objetivo político da Coordenação foi renovar e fazer avançar o CEAS com ousadia e firmeza, apesar das marés contrárias, em fidelidade à sua missão e à sua prática consolidada em mais de trinta anos de atuação junto a setores populares urbanos e rurais, alimentando assim a crença numa sociedade igualitária.’

<sup>11</sup> ‘En que medida o trabalho desenvolvido pela Equipe contribui (ou não) para que O CEAS alcance seus objetivos...’

### 3. Work with youth.

This last goal is new, resulting from the employment of a new staff member, who is to introduce a discussion over the structures of society into his work with youth, through youth culture. According to the head of the urban team, they work on capacity-building in order to confront the structures, not to participate in the structures through capitalism. In the capitalist system, it would make sense to relocate poorer families to the periphery and update areas like *Gamboa de Baixo* for tourism. However, at the periphery these people would become further marginalised from basic services; they would also lose their community. CEAS helps these groups to find their own ways to improve their lives.

This new goal of working with youth, although considered to be interesting and important, was challenged by the participants in the day of reflection. Cunha said the situation could be complicated by entering the cultural realm. The cultural realm is not the same as the political realm, the traditional emphasis of CEAS, and this must be taken into consideration. The trajectory being constructed needs to be determined carefully. The goal of working with youth will have to be critically re-evaluated. A change in the team's goal would have to be set alongside an analysis of cultural structures of power. CEAS is beginning to move into this area as it encourages citizenship in the civil as well as political realms, as the next section of the chapter considers. There are structures of power in civil society just as there are in political society and its communities are interacting with both realms. Thus, both have to be analysed.

The focus of the urban team has to be strengthened to ensure the overall goals are still being met. In the past, the team has been explicit about its objectives. The main objective is to equip communities to struggle with the state. Iraneildson Costa, another staff member, was concerned that the overall objective be addressed first in order to ensure that the secondary goals fit within this context. For example the politicisation of the teachers on Itaparica Island, the focus of the following section, fits into the main goal of struggling with the state. Many of the non-state agencies being confronted are also closely connected to the state, like CONDER- the tourist company targeting the Gamboa community. For Costa, CEAS is trying to teach people to confront the state in all its guises. The rural team, for example, has the specific objective of advising the landless to increase their capacity to fight with the state for the right to land. The two teams' work should be progressing hand in hand.

The emphasis on building the capacity of communities to deal with the state could get lost with the introduction of the new work on youth because this work may

deal with different structures of power. Why should working with youth be separate from the political and articulation goals? According to the head of the urban team, capacity-building for political action has already taken place in the associated adult communities. The work of the new staff member will still be conscientization for political action but with youth. However, it has to be done in a different way. It can't be pushed on the youth; they won't pay attention. Others, however, agreed with Costa that there should be a focus on linking up the goals, and in particular linking the communities to each other, to create spaces for all of them to interact and support each other in the political realm.

The staff members also considered the question of up to what point CEAS should push the communities to confront the government, a similar question to what Dudley had to consider at CA when the supporters focused on individuals rather than structures. What if the newer communities want to focus on other structures? CEAS, in discussion, decided that any solution has to take a community-oriented approach, thus the focus on confronting the government to demand provision of services. The problem with the global economic system is that the only option offered to people is to try to enter the job market. This approach is individualistic as one person finding a job only helps them, not the community as a whole. The communities have to be encouraged to examine their reality in a global context, addressing both the political and economic situations.

CEAS, then, does have its own goal for the communities. For Dorea, it is important to balance the ideas within a particular community with CEAS' overall objective for the work. For Cunha, CEAS has been very attentive to analysing and evaluating so far, but this dynamic of expanding into new areas is different. The goals have to be evaluated so that the specific markers can be met. CEAS has to be more self-critical in this area.

Finally, CEAS has to consider when to leave communities. The urban team planned to evaluate working with the washwomen. They thought it might be time to leave, after 14 years, as the women had now formed a strong community. They have succeeded in setting official price structures as a group for their work. Thus, the washwomen cannot be played off of one another because there is a formal pricing system in place. The main concern was that the same criteria should be in place for leaving any group. A group should not be left because it is not following CEAS' advice but only when it is strong enough to go on its own, when its goals have been achieved. The goal of the team has to be specified before entering the community, so that CEAS

leaves when it is met. The communities have always been involved in setting the goals from the beginning, so they will also determine when it is time for CEAS to leave. This situation should continue with the expansion into new areas.

There was some debate among the staff members over whether or not CEAS was sufficiently self-critical. Dorea suggested each team specify why CEAS was working with a particular group and then hold a discussion as an organisation to ensure that everyone agrees. Perhaps other structures of power can be focused upon as the situation changes but this decision has to be taken by all CEAS staff members. Santa Rita said, 'you come to a moment of denouncing neoliberalism... we aren't just working out a point of view but our ideology.' This is true of the entire organisation and the group agreed. Community goals fit into the overall context of CEAS' struggle for space for the communities to interact with the state and to denounce the global capitalist system.

## 1.2 The process of conscientization and action/reflection on Itaparica Island

This process of action and reflection is also one that CEAS advocates its communities use in order to build their capacity to interact with the state, as the example of the teachers on Itaparica Island makes clear. The government will only fund primary school (ages 8-12) on this island. It refuses to fund pre-school (ages 4-7) or secondary school (13-18), arguing that children can travel to the mainland, a 45 minute boat journey (costing \$1 each way), for further education. In response to this need, several religious organisations set up eight pre-schools. CEAS advises and organises this group of 25 teachers, all women.

Two of the problems prioritised in relation to the island are:

### 1. Lack of pre-schools;

Poor families are accused of taking their children out of school and forcing them to work. For parents, dealing with high unemployment and no social services, the struggle for survival sometimes has to include putting their children into the informal market. Yet the situation is far more serious than even this on Itaparica Island. There is no schooling provided before the age of 8.

### 2. Lack of capacity of the teachers of the community schools;

The first difficulty faced by the primary school teachers is how to begin teaching children at such a late stage. In addition, pre-school and primary schoolteachers face low teacher salaries, poor conditions in the classrooms, the problem of equipping the children with notebooks, pencils, etc., and providing transport to the schools. (CEAS 1999b, 9)



Figure Three: A community school teacher with her pupils.

There are three goals set by the group of teachers.

- The primary goal of this group is to strengthen the public political role of the teachers.
- The second goal is to get them to think about their formation as teachers and their relation to the capitalist structure.
- The third goal is to get them to think about the profession of teaching pedagogically.

Within the process of action and reflection to meet these goals two foci emerge: conscientization to confront structures of power and the importance of community. Conscientization 'refers to the process in which men (sic), not as recipients, but as knowing subjects achieve a deepening awareness both of the sociocultural reality that shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.' (Freire 1985, 93 n.2) People in community become aware of their place in the world and begin to analyse their situation. Such a process began with Freire's analysis of the education system but it has also been a central tenet of the action reflection process in liberation theology. Through the teachers' discussions of pedagogy, the theory and reflection on teaching, they are moving through the process of conscientization. They use the process of action and reflection, develop self-esteem, and work as a community.

The teachers meet every two weeks to discuss the community situation. The meetings are divided into two sections: one focused on pedagogy and the other focused

on the community's interaction with other groups. The first moment forms the basis for the analysis in this section, while the second moment is analysed later in this chapter. The process of education includes planning and organising pedagogical practices. It is in planning that the methods and interests of the teacher become conscious and explicit. (da Silva 2001) Santa Rita is educating the teachers that this reflection on their methods of teaching is just as important as the time spent teaching in the classroom. The process of action and reflection is integral to the entire community and is relevant to any situation.

To emphasise the importance of reflection, Santa Rita often refers to a short story called 'Paper and Ink.' A blank piece of paper is sitting on a shelf when a pen comes by and starts writing on it. The paper is upset that it has been marred but the pen then says that it will one day understand that this is untrue and that more value has been added to the paper with the writing. Sure enough, one day the owner comes in the room and throws out all the scrap paper except this one piece that has writing on it.

Interpreting this story in the context of the meetings, Santa Rita links it to writing about and reflecting upon education. Reflecting on the practice of education adds further value to it. The piece of paper can also represent a teacher to which the writing (the reflecting on education) adds value. The teachers themselves take on the roles of observer and writer. They keep diaries of their work in the classroom and preparation beforehand to share with the rest of the group.

- **Developing self-esteem to confront the structures of power**

The teachers regularly present their teaching diaries to the group for discussion. Patricia, one of the younger teachers, outgoing in informal settings, sat at the front of the group and read her notes very quietly, eyes glued to the page when presenting. After her first paragraph, Santa Rita interrupted to say that it was important for her to meet people's eyes as she spoke. Yet Patricia continued to stare only at the page in front of her. She had no confidence in front of the community of teachers. Santa Rita said from her own observations in Patricia's classroom, she has found her quick to joke and bursting with energy in front of her students but in front of her peers she did not feel powerful. The process of action and reflection should lead to a better understanding of their identity as teachers and thus greater self-esteem for each within the community.

Taking on leadership roles within this community offers a chance for each of the teachers to construct their identity. Santa Rita asked the group to define the term identity. At first, there was silence. Then one teacher mentioned that the identity card, the government requires, gives you a number, but that can't be enough. Santa Rita asked

how early identity begins to be constructed, 'is it in pregnancy?.' Several of the teachers nodded here. She then held up a pile of evaluation forms from a previous workshop. Several women had not signed their names to these evaluations. This could be viewed as a lack of security with their own identity because they did not feel confident in announcing... 'this is me'... 'this is what I think.'

Schoolchildren often experience the same lack of respect and self-esteem amongst their peers that teachers do. One of the teachers who was facilitating this meeting shared a story of one of her students, a little girl who is four years old. This child does not interact with the other children and the teacher gathered that her father treats her very badly. She asked the other teachers and Santa Rita if they knew how to solve this problem. There was much discussion around the room with several teachers having encountered similar situations. Santa Rita suggested that rather than trying to deal with the father directly, which could make things worse, the teacher should concentrate on reinforcing the girl's self-esteem in the classroom over the next four years, before she goes on to primary school, at age 8.

Even when a teacher disagrees with a child's opinion, it is possible to let them know that what they say is of value. For Santa Rita, the students are constructing their identity and self-esteem in the classroom and this must be encouraged. The children are not only learning how to read and write. How they are taught is crucial and this is why the teachers' practical work in the classroom has to be linked to reflection outside the classroom. Otherwise, the practical work will become paralysed. Santa Rita uses the same strategy with these teachers, giving them time to develop and express their own pedagogical opinions.

While the process of action and reflection in these meetings begins with pedagogy it expands to relate the community's situation to the global situation.

'To know our history it is very important for us to understand the history of another'<sup>12</sup>.

This quote, by one of the teachers, reflects the importance of community at both the local level- our history- and at the global level, being aware of how different communities interact.

Linking the teachers' situation at this local level to the global economic and political realms, Santa Rita argues that it is difficult to find a place for reflection in the global capitalist structure. The teachers have to choose to work outwith the global capitalist system because the system is unjust. As the capitalist system distances the

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<sup>12</sup> *'Conhecer a nossa historia é muito importante para entendernos a historia de outro.'*

teachers from reflection it decreases their self-esteem. The system does not recognise them; they are excluded. Similarly, they are not paid by the government; they are not given time to learn or develop their teaching skills. They feel unimportant and unrecognised. The community tries to change this situation by allowing each of the teachers a chance to facilitate the meetings. Several of the women have also had the opportunity to develop their abilities through leadership courses, provided by the supporting organisations.

The global economic and political structures only respond to what creates money and to those who have money. Money takes priority over people; it has more power than people, as the final section explores. In contrast, for Santa Rita,

‘Brazil has to be guided by a person who has already suffered hunger. Hunger is a teacher.’<sup>13</sup>

All experiences shape people’s learning. Yet in Brazil there is a huge gap between people’s experiences. The system is guided by the rich for the benefit of the rich, who are a tiny minority. In contrast, it should be guided by the poor. They have to be prioritised. Thus, the structures have to change. Santa Rita cited the police violence in Gamboa as an example, distinguishing the problems with the police as an institution from the people who are inside that institution. The problem is not only the attitudes of individual policemen and women. It is with the structures that support and guide these individuals. As the teachers realise that their work has to be done outside the current global economic system, they will become more critical of that system.

Criticising the system is not easy; it requires great strength. During one meeting, the group split the word ‘*educador*’ (educator), into its two parts. ‘*Educa*’ is the core of the verb ‘to educate,’ while ‘*dor*’ is the word for ‘pain.’ Being an educator does include pain. Educating is not an easy process. Santa Rita said that the *bicho* (animal/ugliness) of capitalism doesn’t support the proper type of education. In the banking type of education, defined by Freire, a person is seen as empty, needing to be filled with information. In contrast, a true education, for ‘Freire starts with historical individuals located in a particular socio-cultural setting, engaged in a web of social relations.’ (Vásquez<sup>14</sup> 1998, 34) Freire encouraged people to expand their own knowledge from their own situation. Santa Rita wants the teachers to feel confident in destroying what is often looked up to, the assumption that a system based on capitalism is positive.

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<sup>13</sup> ‘*O Brasil precisa ser dirigido por uma pessoa que já passou fome. A fome também é professora.*’

<sup>14</sup> Manuel Vásquez is an associate professor in the Department of Religion at the University of Florida.

Developing self-esteem and power needs to be done as a community, and not used to dominate the community, which is a difficult balance to achieve.

‘How and well it is for us to learn to be better with others and not to be better than others,’<sup>15</sup>

one of the community schoolteachers wrote. For liberation theologians, when one human being dominates another, idolatry is introduced. To offset this tendency, CEAS works to achieve a balance of power in community.

- **Prioritising the community over the individual**

One of the goals for the group is to become a community rather than a collection of disparate individuals. When discussing Patricia’s self-esteem, Santa Rita reinforced this notion of community, stating, ‘*we are good; we are powerful.*’ For her, developing self-esteem occurs in community in contrast to the focus on the individual in the capitalist system.

During a meeting with the local government Tina, another group member, called herself the co-ordinator of the group. Reflecting on this meeting with the teachers, Santa Rita said it was important for each teacher to say that they represent the group but not to insinuate that they have any particular power within the group. Tina interrupted, saying that she said it only so that the government would listen to her. Santa Rita replied that the government should listen to anyone in the group as a representative of it. They should not see one person as a leader of it. The group should not ‘use the same methods that those authoritarians do.’ These ‘authoritarians’ are the government officials who rely on a system of individual ties, historically known as patronage, rather than developing an active democratic community, where power is equally shared between citizens. The following section considers this point further in terms of political and civil society.

Decentralisation of power within this community of teachers is crucial for the community to work as a whole. The work itself cannot depend on any one person in the community. If the municipality decided that it wanted to work with Tina alone this would be terrible, according to Santa Rita. To rely on one person to make the links with any organisation means that it will depend entirely on an individual relationship. If that changes, the relationship between groups could falter even if the remainder of the group has not changed.

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<sup>15</sup> ‘*Como e bom aprendermos a ser melhor com o outro e não ser melhor do que o outro.*’

In the past, one person controlled this group of teachers, keeping power centralised. Thus, there were problems with group coherence previous to CEAS' involvement. With Santa Rita's advice, the group is decentralising, with several of the teachers sharing various responsibilities as well as attending the leadership courses.

One example of the work toward decentralisation emerged as Santa Rita and three teachers planned the gender workshop, which was to be for both the community school and public school teachers. Santa Rita announced the workshop in a meeting of the teachers and read them the entire plan for the next session in minute detail. This included what the resources would be and even what the questions they would be expected to answer on the evaluation forms were. The community provided feedback, approving the work completed so far. Santa Rita asked for two volunteers to write up the meeting as a record. This limits the potential for one person in the group to interpret events in a particular way.

The question of decentralisation also has to take into account the facilitator, in this case, Santa Rita. Research completed on the Base Ecclesial Communities (BECs) showed that the leadership style is generally collegial, as it seems to be in the communities with which CEAS works. However, often the poorest suffer from an inferiority complex, viewing priests and other leaders as prestigious. (Comblin 1994) The community and the facilitator have to work together to overcome this situation, rather than to propagate it.

Analysing how the facilitator interacts with the community is crucial to the development of the community's identity and power structure. Carlos Sousa, a Brazilian sociologist, suggests three possibilities:

- First, the advisor can try to interfere as little as possible in the experiences of the popular organisation, but act as an independent presence.
- Second, the advisor may have a fundamental goal and may work toward that goal in the popular organisations, which would keep the communities from completing their self-development.
- Third, the advisor can have an intermediate goal, negotiated with the communities. The advisor would then interact according to that agreement.

(Sousa 2001, 36)

This third option is advocated both by Sousa and by CEAS. 'The question... is not whether to influence or not. The question is how to influence and in what direction to influence.'<sup>16</sup> (36<sup>17</sup>) At CEAS, the communities set their own goals but CEAS also

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<sup>16</sup> 'A questão... não é de influir or não. A questão é como influir, em que direção influir.'

works within their own organisational goal of developing the communities' capacity to interact with the government. At the same time, CEAS subjects their action to further reflection.

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<sup>17</sup> Sousa is quoting Clodovis Boff.

## 2. How Does CEAS Understand Development and Globalisation?

‘From our point of view, it is not possible to give serious treatment to the social exclusion, ...without a resolution of the ‘ties’ that bind us to the domination of the international financial system. The recolonising offensive of world capital increases the fragility of what is most directly attached to its tentacles. To adopt an ambiguous attitude in this moment is to assume a servile attitude. One cannot expect more than this from the conservative and reactionary elites of this country. It is urgent that the virus of conscious servitude does not get strong enough to break this state of (dis)courage(ment). This alone could contribute to mortgaging the future to someone who has no commitment to social transformation.’<sup>18</sup> (CEAS 2002)

CEAS writes this statement in an editorial about political elections in the Northeast of Brazil. For CEAS, the current state of social exclusion in Brazil is wrong. This exclusion is caused by the global capitalist system, an offshoot of ‘colonisation’ and has to be rejected. Political action for social transformation is crucial to counter this global system. Apathy will allow it to continue. From the action in communities, this reflection emerges, continuing the hermeneutic circle.

### 2.1 Development and globalisation as the continuation of colonialism

CEAS contrasts the mainstream definitions of globalisation with their own definition. Globalisation is usually defined as a

‘process on a planetary scale, seen as irreversible, based in the internationalisation of production, in the democratisation of information and the superseding of national barriers.’<sup>19</sup> (CEAS 2001c, 6)

CA’s definition was similar, arguing that the process is irreversible and emphasising the economic aspect.

CEAS, in contrast, prefers an alternative definition:

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<sup>18</sup> *‘Do nosso ponto de vista, não é possível dar um tratamento sério à exclusão social, ...sem uma resolução das amarras que nos prendem à dominação do sistema financeiro internacional. A ofensiva recolonizadora do grande capital mundial não prescinde da fragilização daqueles mais diretamente atingidos por seus tentáculos. Adotar posturas ambíguas nesse momento é o mesmo que assumir posturas servis. Das elites conservadoras e reacionárias do país não se pode esperar mais do que isso.. É urgente que o vírus da servidão consciente não atinja as forças que têm capacidade de romper esse estado de (des)ânimo. Isto só pode contribuir para hipotecar o futuro a quem não tem nenhum compromisso com a transformação social.’*

<sup>19</sup> *‘Processo em escala planetária, tido como irreversível, baseado na internacionalização da produção, na democratização da informação e na superação das barreiras nacionais.’*

‘globalisation is not a serious concept. We, (north) Americans have invented it to distribute our policy of economic entry into other countries.’<sup>20</sup> (CEAS 2001c, 6<sup>21</sup>)

What is known as a global economic system is an American or Northern system, focused on capitalism, which is being expanded across the globe.

The current focus in this global capitalist system is neoliberalism, as Neto critiqued in the introduction. Globalisation, in this view, is the globalisation of capitalism. One characteristic, as Gorringer noted, is that global finance rules the global economy. ‘The rule of money means that maintaining the stability of wealth accumulation has top priority in all economic decisions.’ (Duchrow 1995, 76) Money, and the growth of money, has priority over people. ‘The ruling elites squeeze the money out of the nations’ that are consistently becoming poorer, a consequence of capitalism. (79) More and more people are being excluded, losing the ability to participate.

Where the market was only part of a wider society previously in economics, under capitalism it becomes the defining part. It assumes that every person can participate in the market. The free market assumes that ‘competing market partners are equally powerful.’ (Duchrow 1995, 30) Yet, not everyone has equal access to or power within the market. It all depends on money. Workers are a commodity dependent ‘on the supply and demand of the labour market,’ a concept critiqued in liberation theology, as the final section explores. (33) Instead of people being most important, they are subsumed in the focus on money in the global economic system.

The concept of development, as used today, is also seen to have emerged from the USA. It was introduced in the USA at the end of the Second World War. Its first focus was on the reconstruction of the North. However, Point Four of former American President Truman’s plan extended this geographical area suggesting,

‘we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas... In cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development.’ (Rist 1997, 71<sup>22</sup>)

This is the first time the word development is used to mean catching-up. Areas need ‘development’ to reach the level of progress attained in the USA.

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<sup>20</sup> ‘Globalização não é um conceito sério. Nós, [norte-] americanos, o inventamos para dissimular nossa política de entrada econômica nos outros países.’

<sup>21</sup> CEAS is quoting John Kenneth Galbraith.

<sup>22</sup> Rist is quoting the Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman, Year 1949, 5. United States Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 1964.

Brazil and other less developed countries are always behind the USA, always unequal. Development can change its meaning depending on the situation in the USA. It is a wish list that changes over time. There is no end to development. In contrast, ‘underdevelopment’ became a ‘naturally’ occurring (that is, seemingly causeless) state of things.’ (Rist 1997, 73) What the USA succeeded in doing was to make development seem like the only option for other countries. It also managed to place the USA on the top of the pile, using the statistic of GNP. This statistic then placed ‘development’ firmly into the economic realm. The USA became more powerful because it defined the rest of the world in relation to itself. People in the ‘Third World’ were now defined by the ‘First World.’

For CEAS, economic globalisation and economic development are no different to colonial economic policies. Globalisation is the continuation of

‘500 years of invasion of the South by the North.’<sup>23</sup> (CEAS 2001c, 7)

The new terms still consist of the old policies of colonialism.

In Brazil, there has never been a focus on the development of the internal market economy. (Cunha 2003) Beginning with colonialism, the market has been developed for external interests. In the colonial era, the Portuguese were the focus. Contingently, in the domestic political realm, power has never been in political parties but in wealthy individuals in the regions, depending on their relationships with people and companies outside the country. They interacted predominantly with interests outside the country. Brazil has not focused on itself as a nation.

As globalisation emerged from the colonial era, so too has development. The Southern colonies became new ‘nations’ where the state became dominant ‘over civil society,’ there was ‘suppression of pluralism,’ and state power was used ‘to serve the interests of exploitative elite elements.’ (Korten 1990, 50) In many Southern countries, including Brazil, the non-democratic governments controlled development.

In Brazil’s case, the elites, and their policies, remained the same in the colonial era and in the development era. Many of the Southern states continue to rely on:

1. ‘Natural resource wealth’; (Korten 1990, 52)
2. ‘import/export licenses and quotas that give their holders near monopoly power over goods and commodities that cross the nation’s borders’; (52)
3. ‘Grants of industrial monopolies,’ (52) and

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<sup>23</sup> ‘500 anos de invasão do Sul pelo Norte.’

4. 'foreign assistance funds and foreign commercial credit.' (52)

Development came to be defined as economic growth. This growth needs an engine and such an engine is trade. Its economic focus narrowed further to capitalism, which encourages increased trade and consumption. For these reasons, development is rejected by agencies dealing with the poorest, such as CEAS.

Different areas of Brazil experience capitalism differently. They also experience different phases of international trade. The state of Bahia still focuses on production for the external market (including other regions of Brazil) rather than meeting internal needs.<sup>24</sup> In Brazil, the southern cities of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro control the focus on economic development. The four types of trade cited in the second chapter still exist in Brazil. Some areas still have localised production. Others produce for the southern regions or produce for export, benefiting the southern regions. Some parts of Bahia produce directly for TNCs. At the same time, there are still areas with slaves and semi-feudal systems. Sung describes these different experiences of the economic situation as 'different overlapping times and spaces.' (Sung 2002, 108) Thus, responses to this situation have to be developed locally.

CEAS, alongside post-development practitioners, rejects both the focus on the development paradigm and on globalisation. They refuse to focus on multinational companies and international trade. Instead, they support 'a person-based approach... one that focuses on the internal market... and that contemplates a role for the state independent of the private sector.' (Ugarteche 2000, x) CEAS rejects a focus on the economic altogether, preferring to build the capacity of its communities to be citizens. Where CA emphasises that countries should retain some control over trade, not companies, CEAS moves further to argue that these country governments have to be primarily responsive to their citizens. They aim to get the local government to focus on local needs and services. They want the government to work responsibly first. They prioritise the local but with a political focus. This is a crucial distinction because when human beings are treated as consumers, they cannot all be treated equally and the poorest are excluded altogether. When citizenship is the focus, all people have the potential for equal participation, and thus, to a greater extent a balancing of power. Most of the communities with which CEAS works do not have a say in any company either as a consumer, employee, or shareholder. Yet, they are all citizens.

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<sup>24</sup> This situation is explored in the work of the rural team, which was outside the focus of this fieldwork. Rural workers for example may work as slaves, or workers on large farms in a semi-feudal system. This is in sharp contrast to the cities where there is also a huge gap between the poorest on the margins and those participating in the international capitalist system.

## 2.2 The focus on political structures: citizens not consumers

‘It seems to us more promising to construct the objective conditions so that the election of a government of the left has the potential to mobilise the masses, the principal agent of transformation.’<sup>25</sup> (CEAS 2001c, 9)

CEAS recognises that they face problems of economic poverty, political poverty, violence and the modern global system’s rejection of religious values. The discussion of development and globalisation at CEAS focuses on political structures, with a political alternative. It is the conscientization and empowerment of the poor, with structural political change, that will transform the global situation.

Much of CEAS’ work is based on a distrust of the ‘political apparatus.’ In 1964 there was a military coup and, thereafter, political opposition or disagreement with the government’s policies was not allowed. As political dissent was repressed, it moved into the churches. CEAS was created in this climate in 1967, at the same time as liberation theology was emerging in the context of a critique of the political and economic situations. From the beginning, CEAS’ focus remained on the political realm, associating economic development with the military government.

The military coup occurred for both economic and political reasons. There was a fear amongst some Brazilians and people abroad that the left was becoming too strong, particularly in light of the new Cuban government. The coup in 1964 represented ‘the triumph of a mentality’ that believed ‘that an authoritarian republic run by ‘experts’ was the best way to create this new Brazil.’ (Eakin 1997, 185-6) Military officers were trained in the USA. This meant they ‘saw the world divided between two contending camps, one Christian and democratic, the other atheist and communist.’ (186) A leftist government could not be either Christian or democratic. Liberation theology grew into this space, arguing that alternatives are possible.

The coup was also supposed to boost the stagnant economy. However, ‘as the economy deteriorated in the late seventies and early eighties, the business elite began to pressure the regime, both publicly and privately, to relinquish power.’ (Eakin 1997, 199) There was an associated push from communities on the ground (like those with which CEAS worked) for direct elections. This push failed, however, and the indirect elections worked in favour of the conservatives (the business elites). Thus, ‘political brokers in the backroom rather than the masses in the streets made possible the transition

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<sup>25</sup> ‘*Parece-nos mais promissor construir as condições objetivas para que a eleição de um governo de esquerda potencialize a mobilização de massa, principal agente de transformação.*’

from military to civilian rule.’ (201) Democracy was reintroduced by a minority not a majority, in the same way as it was uprooted by a minority in the first place. The majority of Brazilians were completely excluded from the political realm.

This democracy has, so far, not been very successful, according to both CEAS and many academics. In post-1985 Brazil, only a minority of people have associated with particular political parties. Instead, people rely on the traditional system of patronage, which is ‘the use or distribution of state resources on a nonmeritocratic basis for political gain.’ (Mainwaring 1999, 177) Patronage is a system by which individual politicians reward those personally who get them into power.<sup>26</sup> Just as the economic realm relied on individual ties under colonialism, so too does the political realm.

Brazilian elites have always controlled politics, as they control the economy. Economic and political power continues to rest in the regional capitals, as Cunha noted. For more than one hundred years, ‘the power of rural landowners’ has been bound up ‘with the resources of the emerging state.’ (Eakin 1997, 173) Thus, the democracy is constructed on patronage and elitism, with certain families continuing to increase their power over time. Democracy has not yet changed the situation; in many cases the regional politicians and the wealthiest families intersect. The ‘most striking feature of Brazilian politics is the ability of this constantly adapting elite to dominate the political process over five centuries’ through a monarchy, a republic, and a dictatorship. (183) The elite has remained stable through each change; the social transformation called for by CEAS has so far not occurred.

The concept of ‘development’ is intertwined with this difficult political history, which is partly why it is rejected by many Brazilians. The ideology of development came into focus before the military coup; however, the regime heightened the emphasis on development. Development as economic ‘growth served to legitimise increasingly authoritarian regimes.’ (Chaffee 1998, 138) Development became associated with dictatorship.

With its focus on the poorest communities, CEAS continues the activism it began during the military dictatorship, encouraging local communities to press for government provision of services through the new democracy. CEAS argues that the military dictatorship is similar to the exclusive democracy that exists now. This political situation is what they are concerned with fighting against, rather than abandoning the

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<sup>26</sup> For further explanation of how this system works in Brazil see Mainwaring 1999. Also, Gay 1999 explores how it does introduce some accountability into the democracy that tends to exclude the poorest normally.

political fight for an economic one that does not relate to their daily lives. CEAS works to build citizenship, as a step toward encouraging the government to respond to its citizens.

CEAS, in fact, still argues for a political revolution. Where

‘the 60s was a decade of hope, the 70s of struggle, the 80s of disillusion, and the 90s of conversion, we can make it so that in the 00s there arises a new cycle of revolution’<sup>27</sup>. (CEAS 2001c, 7)

They define revolution as

‘a radical and profound movement of the political, economic and social structures.’<sup>28</sup> (7)

They see change as emanating from the political system but expanding to the economic and cultural systems too. This frustration with the political system’s ignoring local needs is mirrored around the globe. ‘What we have learned to call the state today’ is different to previous states. (Nandy 1992, 264) In the current global situation, the state is completely intertwined with the economy. It has become ‘the trigger for and protector of the mode or institutions associated with industrial capitalism.’ (265) The state seems to exist to promote capitalism and to ensure the working of the market. It treats citizens as consumers; it prioritises the economy over its citizens.

The problem is that democratic governments remain concerned only with capitalist economics. ‘In the West,... market capitalism... (is) linked with democracy and, as such, (is) the best possible system for the whole of humanity.’ (Berthoud<sup>29</sup> 1992, 70) Democracy and capitalism are assumed to go together. There can be no other economic system in a democracy. It is true that the economy does have to be underpinned by rules and regulations. ‘The real question is by whom, and to whose benefit’ are the regulations introduced. (Amin 1997, 19) Democracy seems to be about consumption, not citizenship. Citizens depend on the marketplace and TNCs rather than on their democratic governments. If a citizen cannot participate in the market, s/he is excluded entirely.

CEAS questions this hegemonic assumption of a capitalist democracy. The organisation held a public debate on struggling with the state. Lurdinha<sup>30</sup>, a community

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<sup>27</sup> ‘Os anos 60 foram de esperança, os 70 de luta, os 80 de desilusão e os 90 de conversão, façamos come que no 00 sobrevenha um novo ciclo de revolução.’

<sup>28</sup> ‘Mudança radical e profunda da estrutura política, econômica e social,’

<sup>29</sup> Gerald Berthoud is a professor at the Institute of Anthropology and Sociology at the University of Lausanne.

<sup>30</sup> Names here have not been changed because the debate has been published.

school teacher, said the state is an instrument of repression and a representation of the dominant interests within a society. From her experience, democracy represents only the majority and still does not allow everyone to participate. For Nelson de Oliveira, a member of CEAS' board, every political party becomes an institution; they lose the sense of contesting and confronting the established state. One has to be critical of political parties in relation to what they do because they are instruments of established power with their own goals. De Oliveira does not want any part of state power as it exists today. He wants to revolutionise it not reproduce it. For Lurdinha, the situation depends on what people want power for. If they will use the same antidemocratic and arrogant form of power then that is useless.

The challenge that remains for the communities who struggle is to distribute political power equally. True 'democracy, as envisaged now by so many groups in Latin America, is based on the co-existence and articulation of five founding forces: participation, solidarity, equality, difference, and communion.' (Boff 1995, 105) CEAS is struggling toward this vision of community, where active citizenship is crucial.

This struggle is exemplified by the protest of the washwomen that was met with a huge police response, which barred them from walking to the steps of the mayor's office. Santa Rita asked what the participants thought about the position of the state because they have to struggle with it to get resources. In the extreme case of the protest they were directly confronted with the police institution.

Angelica, a representative from the washwomen's community, responded that the washwomen felt small and unimportant when their protest was stopped by the riot police. The police would not let them proceed further down the road. There had been a change in the law where people were no longer allowed to protest in front of the mayoral building. The women still had an impact on the police because they walked up to them and reminded them that they had mothers and grandmothers who were washwomen. However, the police were carrying out the orders of the powerful. The structures need to be changed, not just the individual attitudes.



Figures Four and Five: Police barricades during a washwomen protest.

Because the focus remains on money and the economic realm in the combination of a capitalist democracy, the upper classes remain in power. Democracy does not equalise the situation because money continues to have more power than a vote. ‘Socio-economic inequality and exploitation coexist with civic freedom and equality.’ (Wood 1995, 201) Democratic governments currently support rather than challenge economic inequality. ‘Formal democracy leaves class exploitation fundamentally intact.’ (201) The system responds to money not to people; thus consumption becomes a means of exercising power, not citizenship.

Yet, the original concept of democracy gave every citizen a chance to participate equally in society. Capitalism shifted power from participating in the state, to participating in the economic realm, allowing the elite class to retain power even in a democratic system. Civic status became less important, ‘as the benefits of political privilege gave way to purely ‘economic’ advantage.’ (Wood 1995, 208) Although everyone could now vote, the focus on the economic provided another means of exclusion. The ‘people’ became ‘a disaggregated collection of private individuals whose public aspect was represented by a distant central state.’ (219) Consumption became more important than citizenship, disenfranchising the poor. ‘They are excluded first of all from the economy, but this quickly leads to exclusion from political life with consequences for social, cultural, familial relations and self-esteem.’ (Kee 2000, 42) This unresponsiveness of the democratic state to its citizens is what CEAS is struggling against.

Where does civil society fit into this situation? CEAS distinguishes between civil and political structures. It has concentrated its efforts in the past on encouraging communities to engage in political society. However, CEAS itself is in the civil realm. For CEAS, political society encompasses the government with its executive, bureaucratic, and military branches. (Cunha 2001) Civil society includes all social institutions that provide cultural, ideological and religious values such as churches, associations, and other groupings. Neither sector is free from centralisation of power. Those with power will always try to dominate and protect their power. Collusion between political and civil society provides a dominant class.

Civil society is not free of temptation; it too can sin. NGOs, part of civil society, are usually defined as the

‘third sector, between the Market and the State, between the Public and the Private.’<sup>31</sup> (CEAS 2001c, 6)

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<sup>31</sup> ‘*Terceiro Setor, entre o Mercado e o Estado, entre o Público e o Privado.*’

CEAS, however, translates that definition saying an NGO is

‘useful enough to the reproduction of the capitalist system, in so far as it implements the policies of the State.’<sup>32</sup> (6)

Even though political dissent is allowed within the democracy, there is still preference given to those organisations, which mimic the state’s concerns with capitalism. CEAS refuses to contribute to the consolidation of this system.

CEAS is very aware of its place in this realm. One of its goals for the communities is to ‘construct the notion of the State in a Gramscian conception (government apparatus and private apparatus of hegemony or civil society).’<sup>33</sup> (CEAS 2001h, 19) While interaction with the state is the focus, groups have to take into consideration public and private spaces as well as civil society.

In a liberal democracy with its separation between civil and political society, the emphasis is on receiving and enjoying rights not on active participation as a citizen. People participate in economic and civil society instead. However constructive civil society might ‘be in defending human liberties against state oppression,... it is now in danger of becoming an alibi for capitalism.’ (Wood 1995, 238) Civil society was a crucial organising space for dissent, particularly during Brazil’s military government. Antonio Gramsci, an Italian political theorist, conceived of civil society ‘as a weapon against capitalism.’ (241) However, this has changed over time and civil society has become a part of a capitalist democracy.

In this view, culture is relegated to civil society, as if it can be treated completely separately to economics and politics. This allows ‘the global expansion of the western economy and the transformation of non-western societies into havens of western consumerism.’ (Sardar<sup>34</sup> 1998, 57) By moving culture to the realm of civil society, this view can pretend democracy and capitalism do not emerge from particular cultural backgrounds, a point Gorringer raised in his definition of globalisation. Yet, other cultures have had their own types of ‘representative or participatory political structures.’ (60) For example, a capitalist democracy does not allow a place for emphasising the community over the individual, a central concept for some cultures. The focus of a Western democracy is ‘on providing the individual with all possible avenues to pursue

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<sup>32</sup> ‘*Bastante útil à reprodução do sistema capitalista, na medida em que implementa as políticas do Estado.*’

<sup>33</sup> ‘*Construir a noção de Estado na concepção gramsciana (aparelho governamental e aparelho privado de hegemonia ou sociedade civil).*’

<sup>34</sup> Ziauddin Sardar is a Pakistani writer, broadcaster, and cultural critic.

whatever is desired, even if it is at the expense of the community.’ (62) Individual consumption is valued higher than an active community of citizens.

The blame, for CEAS, lies mainly with the capitalist system, which makes people more unequal, under the pressure of individualism. For Neto, the system restricts life to those who can pay. Periphery is not a geographic location but a space

‘where the infrastructure and basic services are precarious.’<sup>35</sup>  
(Neto 2001, 12)

In Brazil’s case, periphery depends on access to money not a particular location. Extreme wealth and poverty exist within metres of each other. Capitalist governments argue that there is no alternative to capitalism and that history is finished. The only option is to reduce some excesses. CA, for example, argues that globalisation cannot be rejected but can be managed. Under capitalism,

‘the project of valid ‘happiness’ consists in consumption and in the pleasure offered to all in the propaganda and soap operas but is reserved for those who can pay for it, so everything is a commodity and the ‘Market’ is the sovereign truth.’<sup>36</sup> (13-4)

Economic development and globalisation offer participation in the marketplace as the solution. Instead, CEAS emphasises participation in political society.

It is participation in the political and civil realms that can change the situation. There are social and individual mechanisms of solidarity. People can be part of associations, groups, teams, clubs or the churches. The following section describes how this participation occurs in practice.

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<sup>35</sup> ‘Onde a infra-estrutura e os serviços básicos são precários.’

<sup>36</sup> ‘O projeto de ‘felicidade’ vigente consiste no consumo e no prazer oferecidos a todos nas propagandas e novelas mas reservados àqueles que podem pagar por ele, pois que todo é mercadoria e o ‘Mercado’ é o verdadeiro soberano.’

### 3. How Does This Understanding Impact Praxis in Communities?

This reflection on the action impacts further action. The two communities analysed here are *Gamboa de Baixo*, excerpted in the introduction, and the community schoolteachers on Itaparica island. Two specific targets are:

For Gamboa: to confront the absolutism of the State (and CONDER [Company for Urban Development in the State of Bahia]);

For Itaparica: for the public budget to include the community schools. (CEAS 2002d, 1)

In both communities, structures are analysed and community action is to confront the political structures of power.

#### 3.1 A community's fight against *Via Náutica*

The community of Gamboa de Baixo is located on the side of cliffs on coastline near the centre of the city of Salvador. It is made up of 250 families, some of whom have lived in this area for more than 80 years. For the last 30 years they have been under the threat of losing their land, particularly after the construction of a new main road at the top of the cliff, which cuts them off from the city centre. To reach the community, one has to climb down underneath this road, as it juts out over the steep incline. The government has tried to expel them from the area in order to develop an official tourist programme. However, the community has been successful in legally defending its right to the land.

There are three main problems for the residents of *Gamboa de Baixo*:

1. Real estate speculation on the part of the middle class;

Following their legal success, there is now the problem of holding on to the land. 'The unemployment situation which is made worse by the lack of places in schools and by urban violence, means that selling ones home is a favourable option.' (Gamboa da Baixo, 2) Often selling the land appears to be the only option in the short term to guarantee the survival of a family. Yet that would split the community, benefiting only the individuals who sell the land.

2. Lack of schools combined with youth involved in the drugs trade;

There is a drug trafficking problem in the community, which seems to be the only way to generate income, except for a small fishing fleet. Thus, there is a lack of support for the community's younger generation.

3. The precariousness of the Residents' Association.

Although the residents could sell their land for a large fee, they and CEAS are against this option as it would mean the residents would have to move out to the periphery of the city where work, schools, and health care are even more remote. Instead, they are still trying to press for these things to be available in their community, focusing on strategies that would benefit the entire community. As part of this, they are trying to raise their public profile, through events such as the photographic walkabout described in the introduction. Thus, CEAS focuses on developing the capacity of the Residents' Association to interact in the public realm.

The residents also need to get control over the attempt to develop their neighbourhood for tourists. *Via Náutica* is a project of CONDER, a company working alongside the city government to develop the coastal communities for tourism. For the head of the urban team, CONDER is so closely linked to the state in its aims for the development work, that for all intents and purposes it should be fought just as if it was part of the local government. Although they are two separate structures, they act together increasing their power over the community. Over the next 20 years, CONDER plans to set up nine new piers around Salvador, including one through *Gamboa de Baixo*. All new facilities will be built, connecting the water to the road above the community, bypassing the community itself. The community, along with CEAS, is trying to negotiate with CONDER to abandon, modify, or at least include the community in the negotiation of their plans.

There are other groups in Salvador who disapprove of the plans. For example, a group of marine biologists argue that the line the leisure cruises will travel along to dock in the various ports of Salvador is the exact line dolphins take through the bay. However, the company ignores the disapproval arguing the plan will create 3000 jobs. When this issue was raised in the urban team reflection day Cunha asked, 'but how many people will it destroy in the process?' For CEAS, there has to be a way to meet these concerns.

The residents, and CEAS, are not looking to keep tourists out of the community. There is beauty in the coastal areas that could be shared with others. However, the tourism needs to include the wishes of the local communities. For example, instead of a port being built with a walkway straight to new purpose-built amenities and restaurants, where the communities would be bypassed completely, perhaps people could disembark in these neighbourhoods. The idea as it stands keeps rich tourists remote from the poor, leaving the poor marginalised, and this is wrong. This remoteness has been an effect of

every tourist incursion into Salvador. When tourists enter, they only see the middle and elite classes.

The government too ignores local concerns. It argues that it has the right to enter and develop these coastal areas. The coastal communities are not considered to have the right to say no to any part of the project. The goal of the project is to attract foreign money to Salvador, focusing on external and elite interests rather than on the interests of those who are marginalised. CEAS' concern is for the betterment of the local communities. The urban team, then, works directly against this tourist advance, which they associate with neoliberalism. The goal of any community change has to be for the benefit of the community itself, not rich tourists.

Resistance is not easy. CONDER counts on NGOs to negotiate with the CONDER bosses themselves, bypassing the communities entirely. The community has made some progress in getting CONDER to recognise the Residents' Association and work with it, through political pressure. They put into place strategies to confront the power of CONDER, particularly the president of the company who had refused to meet with the community. They participated in the Latin America Housing Forum with an open letter demanding that a commission of 10 residents negotiate with CONDER. They also denounced the state with its corrupt and dominating system that allows this situation to occur. That civic participation caused the president of CONDER to meet with the community. (CEAS 2001j, 2) This situation has come about after years of CEAS working in this community with the residents to strengthen their capabilities.

In contrast, the work with the schoolteachers on Itaparica Island is just beginning this process of capacity-building and conscientization. Thus, this next section focuses on the first steps toward capacity-building to confront the economic and political structures of power.

### 3.2 Itaparica Island: The beginnings of capacity-building

The earlier section on action and reflection emphasised the conscientization of the teachers. This conscientization is in part to gain the ability to challenge the local government. This government refuses to assume the costs of pre-school education. (CEAS 2001g, 5) At the beginning of 2001 there was a visit to the community schoolteachers by a lawyer for the island's local government to tell them that the delay in responding to the demands of the community was due to bureaucratic problems. The

participants responded quickly, rejecting this argument. The minutes state that the following question was asked:

‘What is our attitude...: that of the radical Che, who said to his children that the quality of a man and of a woman is to feel ‘moved by such injustice made to such a man or woman in any place in the world,’ or that of the individual who counsels their children ‘is it necessary to learn to be cynical in order have a good life?’<sup>37</sup> (CEAS 2001j, 3)

They accused the lawyer of not addressing the ‘root of the problem of social injustice’<sup>38</sup>.

(3) The lawyer left the meeting at this point and the group began to discuss managing the public budget. They want to construct criteria for the allocation of resources and then pressure the local government to implement the people’s plan. They are becoming active participants in the democratic process. The area suffers from social exclusion, high unemployment, hunger and poverty. The government should be funding the schools, not the poor communities themselves. They feel that education should not be privatised; it is a basic right.

CEAS, and Santa Rita in particular, works to develop the teachers’ interaction with the government. CEAS wants to help the community:

1. to pressure the government to assume responsibility for pre-school education,
2. to better the quality of teaching,
3. to encourage the wider island community to recognise and support the community schools.

At the beginning, the community simply wanted to meet with the local government. They thought that if the government could hear their point of view, it would be on their side. Since that point, they have become more sophisticated in their approach, trying to mix confrontation with negotiation. They held a march with some of their students and they were going to hold another but postponed it because the government representative agreed to meet with them. They will decide what action to take after the next government meeting.

The second half of the teachers’ meetings focuses on ways to interact with the local government. Santa Rita said that she would prepare a formal paper on what a

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<sup>37</sup> ‘Qual a nossa atitude diante da vida e do nosso cotidiano: a do radical Che, que dizia a seus filhos que a qualidade de um homem e de uma mulher é a de sentir ‘sensibilizado com qualquer injustiça feita a qualquer homem ou mulher em qualquer lugar do mundo’ ou a do indivíduo que do alto da sua rasura aconselhará a seus filhos: ‘É preciso aprender a ser cínico para se dar bem na vida?’

<sup>38</sup> ‘Da raiz do problema das injustiças sociais’

community school is and its importance to the island to hand in at the next meeting with a government representative. However, she said the teachers should prepare to speak themselves, because it has more meaning coming from them. Several of them commented on how important it was to get this secretary to be in solidarity with them. Santa Rita reminded the group that the goal is to develop their ability to pressure the government to respond to their demands, not just to get one person on their side. The government has to be dealt with as a structure of power. One of the community members reported back to the group from a previous audience with the local government. She said they might have to make compromises to move forward in the discussions but that the continual meetings are good for the visibility of the community.

The teachers are not yet confident in this interaction. One of the teachers said that she wanted to discuss a problem that she had that others probably encountered too. She was afraid to speak in front of the local government. She felt this was perhaps something they needed to work on as a group. The other teachers agreed. Although the work of conscientization is done in the context of the teachers preparing for the classroom, the practical implications of this are evidenced in the interaction of the community with the government.

Apart from this government interaction, the community works to develop relationships with other local groups. The most prominent example is that of a series of workshops created by this community with the help of CEAS to address gender issues. These community schoolteachers have invited the public schoolteachers on the island to attend the workshops. There are two goals for these workshops: to get the teachers to develop closer relationships with one another and to get the women to address gender issues in teaching. The second gender workshop had 35 teachers in attendance, half of whom were public school teachers. Thus, links are being made.

At the same time, the teachers are trying to make the parents aware of the issues and to get them involved in the process. During a community meeting, one teacher said that a lot of the mothers wanted to attend some classes too to learn and share what they knew. The teacher leading the session said she had a similar experience but wasn't sure how it would work having the parents in the classroom. Santa Rita suggested that the children could have a special day where the parents would be invited to hear the children present what they had learned. Then the parents could get together for coffee and cake afterwards and have time to talk to each other. She said it would be an excellent way of starting to get them involved without the formal atmosphere of a meeting where they would be expected to participate and talk.

This process of action and reflection, the hermeneutic circle, is not only secular. Spiritual reflection is integrated throughout. Building on the reflection conducted in the previous chapter, this final section separates out several of the theological components emerging from the experience of CEAS, explaining how the recent history of Brazil has impacted the reflection.

#### 4. The Poor in Community as an Alternative to Structures of Sin

##### 4.1 What theological issues emerge from this process of action and reflection?

‘The long trajectory from the micro to the macro, from partial knowledge of the immediate effects to a deeper understanding of the root causes of social sin, is what Brazilian Catholic activists call the *caminhada*. The successes and tribulations of the *caminhada* provide the inspiration and testing ground for the believers to renew their faith and strengthen their commitment. At a deeper level, the *caminhada* represents the defining metaphor of the Brazilian popular church’s emancipatory efforts,... the arduous process of self-empowerment among the poor becomes the central sign of transcendence, the only augur of things to come in the reign of God.’ (Vásquez 1998, 190)

This *caminhada* is the process of action and reflection merging spirituality and daily life. Dos Santos earlier described a method of *andade* (walking) alongside the communities that fits this conception of the struggle for a new earth. They struggle against the root causes of social injustice. Theologically, that injustice is described as sin.

CEAS was created within the context of a military government that repressed political dissent and focused on economic development. This government did not believe that the policies of the left could be Christian. Liberation theology countered this assertion with its call for revolution. While theologians in the North were considering how a theology of development could proceed, theologians in Latin America, rejecting development focused on alternatives. Many people in the North question whether this theology remains relevant today to the situation on the ground in the poorest communities. From CEAS’ experience, it does.

From the beginning, CEAS’ emphasis has been on justice in community. CEAS was founded by a group of Jesuits, ‘inspired by human values, evangelists for justice and solidarity.’ (“CEAS”, 1) CEAS maintains its links with the Jesuit tradition although, like CA, it is an autonomous organisation. Both CA and CEAS have faith-based

representatives on their boards. While the Jesuits do not fund CEAS directly, there are normally four Jesuits working as staff with their salaries paid through the Jesuits. However, they are accountable to CEAS for their work.

During the military dictatorship, the Catholic Church served as a safe space for political expression. Yet, the Church's own context was shifting. BECs began to be created at a local level by leaders within the Church. Traditionally regarded as arising from the communities themselves, in truth, they were introduced by progressive leaders in the Church. These leaders 'worked diligently to organize the faithful into politically active organizations,' throughout the 1960s and 70s. (Eakin 1997, 192) They were developing a civil society separate to the political realm, as there was no room for alternatives in the political realm. The 'fundamental features of the movement' were 'an emphasis on working with the poor... and the combination of a message of worldly redemption with the traditional message of spiritual salvation.' (193) Focused on the poor, segments of the Catholic Church put into practice the belief that God's kingdom was material as well as spiritual and was to be worked toward in this life.

The BECs ranged in their foci across a spectrum of Bible study to political and social action for access to land, education and other services. 'Between 1965 and 1985, CEBs provided a guiding pastoral model for the Brazilian Catholic church.' (Vásquez 1998, 48) They offered a means of constructing communities that pointed toward God's new earth. One of the motives from the Catholic Church's perspective was to keep people involved in the Catholic Church.<sup>39</sup> Thus, those moving away from the Bible study and toward political action may have ceased to be considered BECs by the Church. However, they are still BCs, base communities, even if they are no longer ecclesial. CEAS itself works in base communities that expand beyond Catholicism.

The secular and the spiritual merge in this process of action and reflection in these communities. The process has been used by liberation theologians and by practitioners in various fields, like Freire. 'Freire's approach to education had an enormous influence in the Catholic church's formulation of grassroots pastoral and educational initiatives in Brazil and elsewhere in Latin America.' (Vásquez 1998, 36) While Freire began the discussion in terms of education and conscientization, theologians like Gutiérrez drew on his work to develop the method, enriching liberation theology.

Researchers who study BECs today tend to emphasise their shrinking numbers. 'Studies place the number of base communities throughout Brazil somewhere between

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<sup>39</sup> Burdick 1993 examines further the role of the Catholic church in this situation.

80-100,000, ... between 3 and 8% of the national Catholic population.' (Vásquez 1998, 57) Yet, communities are still organising themselves, according to the evidence from CEAS.

It is claimed that the falling numbers are due to the fact that the model of society the BECs wanted to introduce was not possible in the current phase of globalisation.

'The worsening socio-economic situation has redrawn the limits of the possible for poor Brazilians, redefining notions of agency, history, and social change.' (Vásquez 1998, 4) The majority of Brazilians are still being excluded from economic and political life.

'In the face of this chaotic situation, it has become less and less plausible to claim, as do liberation theology and the popular church, that Brazilians can become the 'artisans of their own destiny,' that they can, by their own efforts, make their society more rational, just, and egalitarian.' (4)

The efforts of the BECs did not seem to improve the situation; in fact, it is worsening, with people seeming to lose even more power.

In the face of the global economic system, it appears that liberation theology may be becoming irrelevant. 'Liberation theology has failed to respond to the new reality in Latin America, preserving many utopian themes which now lack credibility.' (Forrester and Kee in Vásquez 1998, x) Yet, CEAS shows that there are themes, which remain relevant. They distrust the state, reject capitalism, and still justify practical action, particularly political action, in the communities.

How is CEAS coping with this changing situation? How does their faith support their praxis? Each problem faced by the communities with which CEAS works seems to be set into the context of capitalism and globalisation by CEAS. People were powerless under the military government, where they could not participate as citizens. Theoretically, this avenue has been opened. These barriers to participation as citizens can be overcome, whereas the barriers to participation in the market can only be overcome by access to money. There is still a way to move forward if the focus is on participation in the political situation.

For CEAS, continuing the struggle toward a new earth is not questioned. Sinful structures still exist. Their work with the communities encourages them to resist these structures, expanding the discussion from the economic to the political realm. CEAS still calls for liberation and revolution, as it did many years ago.

'"Revolution" focused attention on the necessity for qualitative change at the most fundamental levels, levels of values, aspirations and self-understanding. ... It exposed the

institutionalized opposition to an alternative way for man (sic).'  
(Kee 1974, 93)

Liberation is in direct contrast to development. It merges the secular and the spiritual, calling for an alternative to the current system. Perhaps it is this focus on the political rather than on the economic, which allows the struggle to continue in the face of economic disintegration.

Liberation theology can return to the action and reflection occurring at the grassroots level to once again find a voice. 'Even Liberation Theology may have been becoming ideological and losing its foundation of reflecting on the concreteness of life.' (Althaus-Reid 2000a, 46) Liberation theologians need to return to deriving theology from the life of the people and not vice versa. 'Even from the time that I was a student, Liberation Theology told me about myself as it was a normative discourse behaving as ideologies do, pretending to be a 'natural' or 'a given truth,' and 'universal.' (50) Liberation theology was not intended to be dogmatic. Rather it should be ever changing, as it interacts with the situation on the ground. In CEAS' case, this situation seems to focusing on aspects of citizenship.

For Boff, liberation theology is neither dead nor irrelevant. It was created from action and reflection on the part of the poor and it continues to be created in this way.

'Liberation theology was born of a twofold experience: political and theological. From the political point of view, it saw that the poor were a social and epistemological locus; that is, that their cause, their specific interests, their resistance and liberation struggle, and their dreams, allowed a particular and specific reading of history and society.' (Boff 1995, 97)

Beginning from the experience of the poor, liberation theology will suggest alternative ways forward, informing political and theological praxis.

'Liberation theology is also visionary. It dreams of possible transformations and human relationships in which human beings are friends with their peers and not with their executioners.' (97)

These ways forward aim toward a new earth where all will live in just community.

What are the elements of liberation theology that emerge as relevant for the communities today?

- The poor as the starting point for theology

-The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christian will opt for those excluded or s/he will not be Christian. While the criminal inequality in the world grows, as well as those human beings, excluded from life and

from dignity, the option for the poor becomes more and more an essential component of the Church of Jesus.<sup>40</sup> (de Oliveira 2001, 25<sup>41</sup>)

One aspect emerging from the practice of CEAS is the centrality of the poor and excluded to praxis. Dorea conducts a weekly mass in a cathedral in the centre of Salvador. In his homilies, he focused on relating the scriptures to the lives of the poorest. In one such homily, discussing Peter walking on water, he said that while walking on water may seem like a miracle, it is not as much of a miracle as the survival of the poorest every day in Brazil.

Why should the poor be prioritised? The poor are the starting point for theology, for knowing God. 'The mystery is revealed through contemplation and solidarity with the poor; it is what we call the first act, Christian life, practice.' (Gutiérrez in Nickoloff 1996, 29) The hermeneutic circle then also begins with the poor. Theology is revealed through praxis in communities of the poor and excluded. Christians have to recognise that the unjust relations between rich and poor signify unjust relations with God. Therefore, they must prioritise the poor and excluded in order to know God.

This location amongst the poor merges theology and praxis, as Tiongco previously argued. The 'theological and social location for the Christian are one, unified in the specific commitment to the poor.' (Bonino 1983, 44) Other theological and policy elements will then emerge from the starting point of the poor. Such a starting point is assumed by CEAS, in contrast to CA where the question is still debated.

Starting in the communities of the excluded challenges the centres of power. In that challenge, there is a call to repentance, to end the unjust relations.

'Commitment to the poor and oppressed and the rise of grassroots communities have helped the church to discover the evangelizing potential of the poor. For the poor challenge the church constantly, summoning it to conversion; and many of the poor incarnate in their lives the evangelical values of solidarity, service, simplicity, and openness to accepting the gift of God.' (Gutiérrez in Nickoloff 1996, 113<sup>42</sup>)

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<sup>40</sup> *-O século XXI cristão optará pelos excluídos ou não será cristão. A medida que cresce a criminosa desigualdade no mundo, excluídas da vida e da dignidade as minorias humanas, a opção pelos pobres aparece cada vez mais como constitutivo essencial da Igreja de Jesus.'*

<sup>41</sup> De Oliveira is quoting Dom Pedro Casaldáliga.

<sup>42</sup> Gutiérrez is quoting article 1147 from the Puebla document 'A Preferential Option for the Poor'.

The poor are instruments of conversion, calling the rich to build just relationships. They show the rich (individuals and structures) that they are sinning. The question then remains as to what conversion entails in practice. Poverty will not exist in a just new earth. Power will be shared equally within and between the various communities in society.

- Sin in structures and between humans in community

“‘Poor,’ in the biblical sense, denotes the dominated, oppressed, humiliated, instrumentalized term of the practical relationship called sin.’ (Dussel 1988, 22)

How are the relationships between the rich and the poor sinful? Another of the masses led by Dorea focused on Matthew 19:23-4, Mark 10:25, and Luke 18: 24-5, where Jesus said that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter heaven. For Dorea, this statement is literally true. Having more separates a person from others around them and makes it harder for all to become part of the community of God. Even something as simple as a new pair of shoes makes a person stand out from someone without shoes, breaking down community. This reflects Luke 3:11, quoted and questioned earlier by a CA staff member. At CA, they debated whether the person with two tunics should literally give up the extra one to someone who has none. Thus, for CEAS, the prioritisation of the poor requires reducing the wealth of the rich. In God’s new earth there will be no inequality.

CA asks the question- why lower the wealth of the rich. The answer in this view is because having riches is sinful. Why? It is sinful because it causes and results from a situation of injustice. The rich dominate the poor through sinful relationships. The question of injustice and inequality is not addressed through God’s ownership of the earth, in this case, but through the understanding of human relations in community. ‘When a shoemaker exchanges shoes for bread, a relationship between persons arises.’ (Dussel 1988, 79) People trade in community. An act of exchange forms a relationship. While in these relationships today one dominates another, in God’s new earth, they will be equal and therefore communal. This applies to both individuals and structures.

What does domination mean in this context? ‘The origin of evil or sin lies in a negation of the other, the other person.’ (Dussel 1988, 18) Instead of focusing on relationships in community, the focus changes to what one can get from another. This occurs when an individual regards him/herself as more important than the other. The

other becomes 'a thing, a means at the service of the dominator.' (18) A person becomes an object. Treating a human being as an object is sinful. Others should not be used to meet individual needs.

This domination is evidence of idolatry. 'Sinners are left to themselves,' assert 'themselves as God' and they 'fall into idolatry.' (Dussel 1988, 19) Forgetting that the aim of human community is to worship God in relationship with each other, individuals place themselves first. The turning of the other from a person into an object is one of the main problems with the capitalist economy, which uses others to accumulate wealth. 'The act by which one asserts oneself as the end of other persons- as factory owners think they have a right to the factory's profit even though that profit be their workers' hunger transformed into money- is idolatry.' (19) People begin to value themselves above others. Yet all are to be equal before God.

Associated with this change, money becomes more important than the other person. Money itself becomes a person. What does money (capital) represent in the capitalist system? Capital is 'wealth amassed by the means of the blood extracted from the life of the poor.' (Dussel 1988, 143) Money or profit is generated from the work that the workers do; labour becomes money. Instead of the workers keeping the results of their labour, the owner of the business does. Capital only has value 'thanks to the 'surplus life' it extracts from the worker.' (132) The owner takes the profit that truly belongs to those who labour. It is not possible to have true profit, because any profit is taken from a person's life. Those who are rich are only rich through this domination, the taking of the life of another human being. Thus, riches are unjust.

In the capitalist system, money becomes more important than human life. 'Money becomes the fountain through which all commodities have to pass in order for their value to be confirmed.' (Richards and Vidales in Hinkelammert 1986, xviii) Bartering and other mechanisms of exchange disappear. Money is seen as infinite and power is associated with it. 'Everything produced seems purchasable, ... (even) the producers themselves.' (Hinkelammert 1986, 24) All that is left for humanity is the choice of what and who to consume.

This prioritisation of money over people applies not only to trade and work in the capitalist economy. It also applies to property, as Gorringer alluded to. What does the verse 'you shall not steal' mean? In fact, property obtained from the labour of others is stealing. If I claim the right of ownership to a piece of property,

'I am being blind to the fact that private property denied to the workers whose labor has produced it is unjustified

accumulation, taking over the capital of the fruits of their labor, previously stolen from them without my being conscious of the theft.' (Dussel 1988, 33)

Taking goods that do not belong to the other person in the first place then is not stealing. It turns the current definition of stealing on its head. This interpretation returns to the literal meaning of Isaiah that people should not build houses and others live in them. It also returns to the distinction between justice and charity. Charity is only needed when injustice exists. Injustice results from this domination. It is not about the rich individual or structure using power incorrectly- no one should have more than others in the first place.

The 'rich' are both individuals and structures. The system itself is one of domination; structures dominate. The global system is 'under the hegemony of evil,' which is capitalism. (Dussel 1988, 29) It should worship God. Instead, it currently 'has the Devil... as its principle and authority.' (29) Structures need to be redeemed, converted to their true purpose. These structures include institutions, companies, and governments. 'Social sin is transmitted by institutions- by cultural, political, economic, religious, erotic, and so on, structures.' (22) Each of the principalities and powers, defined in the previous chapter, can and does sin.

People then sin as individuals through their participation in these structures. 'Each individual... consciously assumes... the meaning of his or her 'place' in the institution structure of sin.' (Dussel 1988, 24) Individual and structural sin are intimately linked. Individuals dominate each other and then expand to dominate each other through structures. The capitalist system begins with the domination of one human being by another through profit and extends all the way to 'the transfer of the life of the worker of a peripheral country to a central country via the supplies of capital between competition.' (141) Thus, individual and structural sin has to be dealt with at the local and at the global levels.

Christians have to choose between life and death. Salvation should mean an end to all sin, 'especially structural and economic.' (Nagle 1997, 10) Yet many Christians do not make this further choice, continuing to participate in sinful structures. Jesus set the example with his own life. He began in community with the poor. His new ethical code has four crucial parts:

1. 'the importance of keeping account of the mechanisms of sin,' (Dussel 1988, 73)
2. 'the ethical duty of dismantling these mechanisms,' (73)

3. 'the necessity of constructing an escape route from the system,' (74) and
4. 'the obligation to build the new system of justice.' (74)

People have to become aware that there are structures of sin. They have to struggle against them, recognising the alternatives that can and do exist. In CEAS' case, these alternatives arise primarily through the political realm. Christians are to work toward God's new earth in community where justice will rule.

Beginning in communities of the poor, structures of sin can be analysed and then people can begin to create an alternative, the just new earth.

- **Conscientization for the sharing of power in community**

How will structures and individuals be redeemed? What is the alternative? A just system has a balance of power. This balance does not occur automatically. It requires a process of conscientization in community. This conscientization merges faith and praxis.

The BCs can be models for working toward God's new earth in community. This alternative includes the work of Freire and others on conscientization in the process of education. It expands to all practice of the process of action and reflection, the hermeneutic circle. This process has been and can continue to be applied to the global capitalist system. The situation is viewed, analysed and judged in light of the faith. Finally, action is taken based on that reflection.

Such action and reflection from the poor in community shows that liberation will lead to this new earth. It is the 'defeat of this alienating, sinful social relationship', where money is prioritised over people. (Dussel 1988, 143) The poor realise that being poor is not natural; it is not God's intention for the earth. The worker should own the fruits of their own labour. 'The social teaching of the church admits that the natural owner of a product is its producer, the worker.' (118) Putting such belief into practice would change the global system entirely. Yet, the need for just relationships can be expanded beyond labour: 'all praxis directed to the liberation of the poor is basically good.' (56) The poor can start to build this new earth focusing on just relationships in community.

What does community entail? 'The essence of Christian life is community.' (Dussel 1988, 7) Community is the building of human relationships and the building of a relationship between humanity and God. This community concentrates on praxis. Where there was the praxis of domination in the capitalist system, the alternative

through conscientization will be the praxis of love. This love is 'love for the other... for the sake of that other,' including 'delight, beauty, goodness and holiness.' (10) In just communities, each person is concerned for the other, not for the individual alone.

Just community is crucial because it is only through just community that people can know and love God. 'We meet God in our encounter with others.' (Gutiérrez in Nickoloff 1996, 150) It is not possible to know God otherwise. 'The love for God is expressed in a true love for persons themselves.' (155) People show their love for God through their treatment of human beings. This includes all human beings, prioritising the excluded, 'those whose human features have been disfigured by oppression, despoliation, and alienation and who have 'no beauty, no majesty' but are the things 'from which men (sic) turn away their eyes.' (Isa. 53:2-3)' (155) Every person has to be treated justly in community in order for God to be present.

This conscientization, however, does not mean that resolving the situation will be simple. While the end point is clear, there still has to be constant action and reflection to encourage communities to move toward the goal and to ensure that power remains decentralised in community. 'Concretely, there is always a power structure, in either the dominative or the solidarity version. There are always inequalities and stratified roles, in function of some particular scale of values. There are conflicts and particular interests.' (Vásquez 1998, 50<sup>43</sup>) The distribution of power is crucial to the discussion of community; it never disappears, as the conversation about democracy in the previous section made clear.

In order for power to be shared in community, several elements have to be in place.

'It is in this struggle that people discover points that are fundamental: the solidarity and the love of one another. Whoever doesn't have this is not capable of struggle!' <sup>44</sup>  
(Lurdinha in Debate [2001], 69)

People have to be able to participate. People have to be working together. All have to show love for each other. There has to be diversity. Finally, the concept of communion is central.

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<sup>43</sup> Vásquez is quoting Boff. 1980. 'CEBs e práticas de libertação,' *Revista Eclesiástica Brasileira* 40, no. 160, p. 611.

<sup>44</sup> 'é nessa luta que a gente descobre pontos que são fundamentais: a solidariedade e o amor ao outro. Quem não tem isso não é capaz de lutar'

It is in the celebration of the Eucharist that a model for community can be found.

- The Eucharist: Model for life in community

‘...Eucharist, the first duty of the ecclesial community. In sharing bread, we remember the love and trust of Jesus who was taken to His death, and the confirmation of His mission towards the poor through the resurrection. The breaking of bread is both the point of departure and the destination of the Christian community. This act represents the profound communion with human suffering caused in many cases by the lack of bread, and it is the recognition, in joy, of the Resurrected Jesus who gives life and lifts the hopes of the people brought together by his acts and his word.’ (Gutiérrez 1999, 37)

Liberation theologians draw on the model of the Eucharist for life in community. While it can be a model for reverent consumption, as explored in the previous chapter, it is expanded further. The Eucharist shares the body and blood of Christ equally in community. The body is bread. The bread that is used in the Eucharist is produced by human hands and made sacred by God. This contrasts with the situation in reality where not all have equal access to bread. As Neto stated, people are struggling for their daily bread.

The bread of the Eucharist and the bread of daily life are merged just as the theological and the secular have been merged throughout this analysis. The masses conducted by Dorea and others weekly in a cathedral in the centre of Salvador are attended by over 200 people. The seats and aisles are filled and often there are people standing outside the doors in the street listening to the mass. In this mass, the Eucharist is celebrated as in a Western Catholic mass. However, there is a second celebration toward the end of the mass. Between twenty and thirty women gather in the back of the church with baskets of bread that they have baked that day. They move up the centre aisle to the front where the priests bless the baskets. These baskets are then passed through the cathedral and each person receives a small loaf of bread. This celebration is accompanied by singing and the moving of the priests through the crowd, also blessing the participants. In this way, the mass ends.

The relevance of the Eucharist to the Christian community can be broken down further than the need for reverent consumption. The first important concept to emerge from the Eucharist is that bread is at the centre. ‘In order to break bread together, to share bread... there must be bread.’ (Dussel 1988, 11-2) In order to celebrate the

Eucharist, there has to be bread to be shared. Someone has to bake this bread. 'It is a real, material product, something made. At the same time it is made for another. ... This complex relationship is called 'economic.'" (12) The bread is not made to be eaten by the producer alone. It is to be shared in the Eucharistic community. It is a merging of the spiritual and the material.

Second, when the bread is produced it has to be distributed. It is given, exchanged, or sold to the community that is participating in the Eucharist. 'The question arises how to share it (the ethical element and the communitarian element), the temptation arises not to share it (sin), and the need arises to celebrate it, for the gladness that the bread produces.' (Sobrinho 1996, 67) Thus, the Eucharist merges with the economic realm. However, this question is not only economic. It is also political in that it must be decided how the bread is to be shared. In this way too, the spiritual, political and economic realms merge.

Third, in order for the bread of the Eucharist to be just, it has to be produced justly; it cannot be the product of exploitation. Gorringer argues similarly, citing the realisation of this fact by Bartolomeo de las Casas, a Spanish priest working with the colonies in Latin America, in the 1500s. De las Casas 'saw the connection between a situation of exploited labour and the eucharist.' (Gorringer 1997, 42) This realisation came from the set scripture in a service he was to conduct:

'if one sacrifices ill-gotten goods, the offering is blemished; the gifts of the lawless are not acceptable. ... Like one who kills a son before his father's eyes is the person who offers a sacrifice from the property of the poor. The bread of the needy is the life of the poor; whoever deprives them of it is a murderer. To take away a neighbour's living is to commit murder; to deprive an employee of wages is to shed blood. (Sirach 34. 21-7)' (42-3)

De las Casas realised that this principle applied to the celebration of the Eucharist too. 'The bread of the eucharist signifies not just the good earth but also the human product, the fruit of exploited labour.' (43) As with every action, there has to be a choice between life and death. Using the product of exploitation to celebrate the Eucharist is to bring the celebration of death into the Eucharist itself. This is idolatry. God cannot be found in the celebration of death. God chooses life.

The Eucharist, as the main celebration of the Christian community, provides an alternative model for life in community. It is focused on communion. 'Communion is the capacity for establishing interpersonal relationships, for nourishing spirituality... (to) build up human community.' (Boff 1995, 107) The Eucharist helps to build a just

community. In this community, justice is the goal, which requires the prioritisation of the poor. It also requires equal participation in community not just an equal sharing of the goods to be consumed.

Thus, the discussion expands from the economic realm to the political realm, to a discussion of citizenship. Participation in community includes every person regardless of race or gender or any other characteristic that causes people to be excluded. No one is to be excluded from God's communities. It is this reflection on citizenship that could be developed further to engage with communities of the poor around the world working toward the new earth.

The final concept that the Eucharist clearly shows is that the sacred realm and the secular realm cannot be separated. The same can be said of the Christian community in general. 'Sharing bread, holding all things in common, and selling one's possessions and goods all indicate the radical nature of love that it respectful of the loved person(s).' (Dussel 1988, 12) The Christian community is meant to share all with each other because of the love of God and the other. This sharing merges the sacred, the economic, the political, and the social realms.

In the case of CEAS, this community is multi-faith; the values of love and sharing to achieve just community expand beyond Christianity.

- A Multi-faith *caminhada*

-The 21<sup>st</sup> Century will either be mystical or it will not be human. Because the mystical is that profound meaning of life, that opening to the horizon of God, in search of the final answer;<sup>45</sup> (de Oliveira 2001, 25<sup>46</sup>)

This quote comes from a Brazilian priest speaking in 1999 about the approaching new century. Humanity has to recognise the importance of spirituality. This spirituality, however, does not have to be limited to Christianity, or a particular Christian tradition. For Neto, religion and the churches can be an element of integration, not separation. Religion stems from the word *religar* (to re-link). Religion can re-link

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<sup>45</sup> '-O século XXI ou será místico ou não será humano. Porque a mística é esse sentido profundo da vida, essa abertura ao horizonte de Deus, em busca da resposta última;

<sup>46</sup> De Oliveira is quoting Dom Pedro Casaldáliga.

‘people with God... if you do not love the one next to you, who you can see, then you cannot love God, who you cannot see.’<sup>47</sup>  
(Neto 2001, 12)

Finding the spiritual will help people to re-link to each other, building community.

Oppositely, building the community will help people to re-link to God.

CEAS is able to link faith and praxis in communities without being exclusively Catholic. People seem to be comfortable mixing ‘motivations’ for work with the poorest, for a new society. In a CEAS debate open to the public, Clóvis Cabral, another Jesuit working with CEAS, stated that what motivates people in the struggle for survival and justice can be called many things: *axé*, divine grace, mantra, mystique, spirituality, ethics or humanism. One participant in the debate, Lurdinha, explained:

‘when people ...are perceiving something, something inside... that some say is God, others Jehovah, others Olorum, ... that makes a person start to perceive the state of hunger, of unemployment, of the lack of housing and of basic sanitation. There has to be something that starts, in this dazzling poverty, to see a light, something that is inside people. A perspective: ... of you being a person, of you stopping to be an object and becoming a subject of this struggle that you constructed in daily life.’<sup>48</sup> (Debate [2001], 67)

Any or all of these things encourage people to transform Brazilian society, to turn people back into human beings, rejecting their treatment as objects.

During this debate, the participants were asked where their strength to struggle stems from. One washwoman spoke about the difficulty of keeping her dignity while washing the clothing of rich women. She struggled to maintain a fair price in the face of the people buying washing machines and saying the washwomen charge too much. She said,

‘the Holy Spirit, that strengthens us and gives us this force; and also to struggle, that gives such strength to the desire that, at the same time that you don’t want to, you go! So, first I have to ask God, I pray before I leave the house, ask the Divine Holy Spirit to accompany me and I go. Sometimes, I nearly break my heart,

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<sup>47</sup> ‘Pessoas a Deus...como quem não ama o próximo (que vê) não pode amar a Deus (que não vê).’

<sup>48</sup> ‘E quando a gente ... vai percebendo alguma coisa, uma coisa de dentro, ... que alguns dizem que é Deus, outros que é Jeová, outros que é Olorum, ... o que faz com que a gente comece a perceber esse estado de fome, de desemprego, de falta de moradia e de saneamento básico. Tem que ter alguma coisa que comece, nesse deslumbramento da miséria, a ver uma luz, alguma coisa que tem dentro da gente. Uma perspectiva: ... de você se sentir gente, de você deixar de ser objeto e passar extremamente a se sentir sujeito dessa luta que você constrói no cotidiano e no dia a dia.’

but I go there into the struggle, to raise the state of mind of the other washwomen.’<sup>49</sup> (Debate [2001], 72)

While the ‘struggle’ can be expressed in theological or Christian terms, there is not necessarily a distinction made between the theological and the non-theological. Faith blends in with praxis, determines praxis, and is determined by praxis.

It is in this context that base communities could be redefined, because they do still exist, although they are not exclusively ecclesial. For Gorringer, ‘a ‘base community’ is any community of resistance and hope that gathers itself around the Christian story, and finds resources for celebration and struggle there.’ (Gorringer 2000b, 85) However, an even more flexible definition is needed to encompass groups that acknowledge a linking spirituality throughout different faiths and those that may reflect on values not linked to a particular faith. One ethnographer speaks of the merging of spirituality in the following terms. Although her area

‘is nominally 95 percent Catholic, the church’s presence in individual lives varies considerably. Many professed Catholics rarely enter a church and instead find spiritual expression in... Candomblé ...(or other) traditions with roots in African religions and the imposed Catholicism of slavery.’ (Nagle 1997, 54)

People who call themselves Catholic may also believe in and participate in other faiths. There does not have to be a simple linkage between one faith and praxis.

There is a complex relationship in Brazil between the African-Bahian religions and the Catholic Church. Catholicism is the majority religion in Brazil, and has been since colonial times. Protestants and people of other faith then form the minority. However, the statistics of religious association do not tell the entire story. The people of other faiths include those who practice the Afro-Brazilian religions descended from the former slaves who brought their religious traditions with them from Africa. When the slaves arrived, they were forced to convert to Catholicism, which led to the merging of religions. Today this mixing of different faiths continues.

‘A popular saying describes Bahians as a practical people who go to church in the morning, a Spiritism session in the afternoon... and a Candomblé ritual in the evening. Bahians tend to be eclectic because no one knows for sure, of course,

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<sup>49</sup> ‘*Ao Espírito Santo, que nos fortalece e nos dá essa força; e também à luta, que dá aquela força de vontade que, mesmo não querendo, você vai! Então, primeiro eu tenho que pedir a Deus, faço minha oração antes de sair de casa, peço ao Divino Espírito Santo que me acompanhe e estou indo. Às vezes, posso até quebrar a cara, mas eu vou lá na luta, pra levantar o astral das outras lavadeiras, entendeu?*’

which path is the one that will insure the fulfilment of their needs and wishes.' (Silverstein 1995, 137)

In the face of this situation, a definition limited to Catholicism or to Christianity does not fit. The communities within which CEAS works reflect this mixture of faiths.

Dorea speaking in an interview for a programme on Salvador, Brazil for BBC2 confirmed this integration of Catholicism with other religions, in his experience. (Brazil: Inside Out [2003]) When the slaves arrived in Bahia, they already had their African religions. Yet they were forced to convert to Catholicism.

'I'd say that here in Brazil the negroes never had a European faith. The faith of our people here, was born like this, already plural. So we bring together a melting of many faith traditions.'<sup>50</sup> ([2003])

The interviewer then asked what his opinion was of a person who may be praying to Mary and also seeing her as Iemanjá, the goddess of the sea in Candomblé. In this tradition, the gods and goddesses were overlaid with the Christian saints so that the practice appeared to be Catholic. Today, the saints have double meanings for many people, whether they consider themselves to be Catholic or of another faith. To this question Dorea responded:

'If anyone has faith, it's good they come to the House of God. Whatever faith it is. If you have faith, you're welcome.'  
([2003])

This is the multi-faith situation in which CEAS, and CA too, implements the hermeneutic circle.

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<sup>50</sup> All of these are the translations used in the documentary.

## In Conclusion

Both CEAS and the communities in which it works follow the hermeneutic circle. The process of action and reflection ensures that CEAS staff members work toward the same goal. This goal is social transformation for justice, focusing on the poorest communities. They aim to build the capacity of these communities to participate in the political realm. The communities then define their own goals within this context.

For example, on Itaparica Island the community schoolteachers are working through a process of conscientization, acting and reflecting on their work as teachers and on their local situation as it relates to the global. They are developing self-esteem to confront the structures of power. Yet, they remain aware of the need to spread the power equally throughout the community, prioritising the community over the individual.

CEAS differs from CA in its analysis of the development paradigm and globalisation from their location amongst the poorest. Development and globalisation are simply continuations of the destructive policies of colonialism and must be rejected. Instead, CEAS focuses on political and civic structures, emphasising the importance of developing citizenship in community, rather than consumption, as their communities have no opportunity to consume.

This reflection directly impacts the praxis in the associated communities. In Gamboa de Baixo, the Residents' Association interacts with the government to counter the tourist advance into their area. They have developed their expertise over a number of years. The schoolteachers on Itaparica Island, in contrast, are just beginning this process. They are calling for the government to recognise and support the pre-schools.

This hermeneutic circle merges the spiritual and the secular. CEAS was created under the military government to work against political repression. Liberation theology and BECS grew in the same context and CEAS draws on this tradition. The poor are the starting point for faith and praxis. This praxis is to convert structures of sin, which destroy communities. In just community, there will be no rich and poor. The process of conscientization urges the building of just, not dominating (sinful) relationships. The Eucharist is a further model for economic, political, and spiritual life in community.

Finally, although CEAS draws on the tradition of liberation theology, their action and reflection expands beyond Christianity. Their *caminhada* is multi-faith. The communities in which CEAS works are also multi-faith and their success in merging realms could be instructive for CA.

The final chapter then will consider the work of CEAS and CA together, as they struggle toward the new earth to suggest themes for further research.

## Conclusion: Balancing the Present and the Future in God's New Earth

This thesis has explored the contribution that Christianity can make to development and advocacy work through the experience of a faith-based agency, and one of its overseas partners. First, it suggests a method for integrating theology and policy. This method, followed at CA and CEAS, is the hermeneutic circle. At CA, there is a process of action and reflection used consistently. However, not all staff members are aware of the process. When the faith and the policy are analysed, the policy is not fully subject to suspicion. When faith and practice diverge, faith is not able to influence further praxis. Yet, CEAS shows this spiral is possible. They consistently reflect on their action, which influences further praxis. In addition, they facilitate this process in the communities in which they work. CA, by learning from the experience of its partners, could continue to develop its use of the hermeneutic circle.

Second, merging theology and development and advocacy work through the hermeneutic circle leads to consideration of particular themes. CA has chosen to campaign for fairer rules on international trade and regulations on TNCs. This reflects CA's understanding of development as economic growth with poverty reduction and of globalisation as irreversible.

Yet CA's theological reflection places some of these opinions under scrutiny. Discussion begins in the context of struggling toward God's new earth, where there will be justice in community. Today's policies have to be subjected to this goal, recognising that God's kingdom is material as well as spiritual, requires human action, and is present now although not in complete form.

For CA, justice requires that the community be prioritised over the individual. In prioritising community, there has to be a bias toward the poor. In a just community, there would be no distinction between rich and poor. To fully prioritise the poor, the rich (individuals and structures) need to reduce their riches. Structures have given their power to money rather than to God, idolising money. These principalities and powers need to be redeemed to once again work toward God's new earth. Each of these concepts has policy implications that could be considered further in the hermeneutic circle.

CEAS focuses not just on economic inequality but on the range of inequalities caused by structures of power. Power has to be decentralised and dealt with at every level of community. CEAS rejects the development paradigm and globalisation as negative concepts that continue the policies of colonialism. All of these policies lead to

further inequality. Instead, CEAS works toward the new earth through a process of conscientization. This includes developing self-esteem to confront the structures of power and recognising the importance of equal relationships in community. Further, this reflection stems from a range of faiths.

Liberation theology grew out of a critique of repressive governments and economic development. Thus, the merging of liberation theology with post-development alternatives is not surprising. At CEAS, beginning theology with the poor is not in question because they are located amongst the poor and excluded. Liberation theology conceptualises the poor as an agent of salvation. The poor show the rich their sinfulness. These structures need to be converted so that human beings are recognised as both citizens and consumers, acknowledging the equal importance of those who cannot consume. For CA, however, the merging of liberation theology with development practice is more difficult. At several points, the theology presents challenges to the policy, that have yet to be resolved.

### How Can a Faith-Based Agency Deal with the Tension between the Present and the Future in God's New Earth?

This diverging analysis raises a further question of how a faith-based agency can deal with the tension between the present and the future in God's new earth. This question can be explored in three parts, each of which could be further developed by theorists and practitioners.

- How does this tension impact the focus on consumption?
- How does this tension impact the process of action and reflection?
- Can this discussion be expanded beyond Christianity?

Rephrasing the question, one can ask whether CA considers the end of development (God's new earth) where justice rules. This new earth will be fully present in the future but aspects of it are also present now. Thus, human beings have to actively work toward the new earth.

This struggle toward a new earth raises two types of tensions. The first is between development and advocacy work. The second is between the advocacy work in the North and conscientization in the South.

In the first situation, there is a tension between relief and development work and advocacy work. Relief and development work aims to alleviate the suffering of the most marginalised in the present mainly through funding changes in the South. Advocacy

work aims to change the structures and systems that allow the South to suffer in the first place. Radical policies will change the structures and systems, introducing the new earth but it may take some time to implement revolutionary changes. Thus, there is also action that needs to be taken now to alleviate immediate suffering. It is not enough to work toward future change but leave people hungry. CA attempts to balance the two aims in its organisation. To maintain and deal with this tension requires a careful and considered process of action and reflection, as this chapter explores.

This tension is further heightened by CA's attempt to include its overseas partners in the conversation. Within the work to change the structures and systems, there is a spectrum of ideas around the changes needed ranging from reform to revolution. Responding to the development paradigm and the phenomena of neoliberalism and globalisation

'the different continents were grappling with the same economic forces. But the specific emphases were different. Coming from the least developed countries was a strong, prophetic, biblical- and sometimes biblically literalist- voice, in keeping with the magnitude of the human suffering that people were undergoing; from the industrialized world came a more measured reformist dialogue with holders of power and economic policy makers.'  
(Linden 2000, 19)

Often, agencies in the South advocate more urgent and far-reaching changes than those in the North, as they are based in communities of the poorest. For agencies like CA integrating these perspectives is crucial because they advocate on behalf of their partners. Their legitimacy comes from these partners in the UK and overseas.

At the same time, there is a second tension between conscientization and advocacy. Conscientization is a process occurring within the poorest communities where people gain the power to change their own lives. Advocacy to change the system, in contrast, comes from those who are not poor, acting on behalf of and with those who are poor. The question is one of empowerment, as development practitioners have consistently argued.

'In the process of conscientisation, people discover their own powerlessness and find the resources within themselves and within their group to translate that powerlessness into a readiness to confront abuses of power. In the advocacy model, (in contrast) one group of powerful people confronts another group of even more powerful people and seeks to persuade them to use their power less tyrannically.'  
(Elliott 1987, 102)

While the people in power may use their power for good, there is still an inequality in the distribution of power. Both groups should be working toward ending this inequality, not supporting it by participating in it.

Both of these tensions arise within and between communities, like CEAS, who reject development, and those like CA who still work within the development paradigm. Because for CA, poor people are to have a central role in policy-making, such tensions cannot be ignored but rather have to be regularly reflected upon. The balancing of the present and the future is crucial to the practice of agencies like CA.

Reflecting further on the concepts of sin and redemption in liberation theology could aid this discussion. For liberation theologians, salvation has a material as well as spiritual component. Jesus is 'the one who comes to complete and perfect the body, already liberated in faith, with a liberation on the new earth.' (Hinkelammert 1986, 186) God will bring about a new earth where humans will not be oppressed. Human beings have to work toward this new earth that Jesus proclaimed.

Yet, human beings will not defeat these sinful relationships and structures on their own. Liberation theology 'affirms God as the secure basis for achieving human utopia beyond the limits of what is humanly achievable.' (Hinkelammert 1986, 227) God and humans are working together.

Until God's new earth is fully present sin will reappear. This sin is the injustice resulting from an imbalance of power that causes economic and political poverty. No global economic system, 'capitalism, or socialism, can eradicate poverty forever.' (Dussel 1988, 95) God's new earth is not yet fully present. So how should CA compromise? Money will not rule the new earth but how far are Christians to go now in rejecting the system and setting up alternatives?

Salvation and conversion, as liberation, are concepts that reflect a continuing process. People continue to move toward the new earth through conscientization and the practice of the hermeneutic circle. The process of redemption will then continue over time with current action being considered in the light of the ultimate goal.

- How does this tension impact the focus on consumption?

The emerging theological concepts and the experience of CEAS suggest that the current discussion cannot be limited to the economic realm, as the new earth itself will not be limited to the economic realm. Yet, the focus of CA seems to be on those who can consume. 'We buy in a culture that encourages us to define ourselves by what we consume, rather than as human beings made in the image of God.' (Dudley 2002, 12)

Consuming is only one part of being human, however. By focusing on consumption, the global economic system ignores anyone who does not consume. In this way, people are excluded from community. That is the primary dilemma that the CA trade campaign faces.

‘Now there is this new concept to add to the ideas of poverty...: the excluded, the marginalized, the person who simply doesn’t count, who in effect, becomes disposable... This person has not a shred of power and cannot even be considered exploited because at least the exploited fall within the system. (12<sup>1</sup>)

There is no room in the global economic system for the poorest, which is why CEAS rejects the development paradigm and globalisation entirely in favour of an alternative where people can participate equally in the building of a new earth.

The global economic situation has become so remote from the lives of the poorest that any element of participation in the system can be considered an improvement, even a situation of obvious exploitation.

‘It is now a privilege to be considered exploited in Brazil because that means at least you have a real job. The church has been prepared to work with workers, but no one was prepared to work with the ‘leftover multitudes’ of people who work ... in the viaducts, the millions who do not live just in poverty, but in extreme misery.’ (Dudley 2002, 12<sup>2</sup>)

While CA criticises the unfair rules of international trade, simply being subject to these rules is beyond the realm of possibility for the poorest communities. Rather than allowing this situation to continue, where exploitation can be considered a positive move along a spectrum, alternatives are needed. These alternatives have to include the poorest who are currently excluded from the global community. They can aim to rebuild community participation and inclusion.

Economics has been prioritised, elevated above other realms. Power is given over to it. This ideology has been defined as economism<sup>3</sup>, which allows ‘economics to dominate society.’ (Cobb 1999, 1) Economics is said to be able to provide the solution to society’s problems on its own without consideration of other spheres. The political and cultural realms become irrelevant. The goal of economism is not God’s new earth. It ‘aims at a world in which all ideological and cultural differences will be subordinated

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<sup>1</sup> Dudley is quoting Pablo Richard, a Chilean priest. 1993. ‘Close up: Liberation Theology, Theology of the South, Envio, Universidad Centroamericano, Managua, Nicaragua, vol 12, no 143.

<sup>2</sup> Dudley is quoting the National Catholic Reporter, October 15, 1993, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Cobb contrasts economism with ‘earthism,’ a concept focusing on ecology. For comparison of the two ideas see Cobb 1999.

to the common concern to satisfy people's desires as individuals.' (Cobb 1999, 56) Community is ignored as is any relevance of difference. Needs become an ever-expanding concept with the ecological implications also ignored. This can be contrasted with the characteristics of God's new earth explored in the third chapter.

While economics itself should not be prioritised over life in community, within economics the focus does not have to be on the accumulation of money. There are other options for the economic realm. Throughout history there was a distinction 'between the need-oriented household economy and the money-accumulation economy.' (Duchrow 1995, 20) The first type of economy was focused on the management of the household and the second moved beyond the household's needs- expanding this concept. Reciprocity and redistribution were alternatives to bartering in the local market that were simply not possible with more complex trade and production that began to focus on profit. The focus on the local changed in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries when the north-Italian merchants began to accumulate capital. Production and trade became means of acquiring money for war-making and capitalism emerged. Over time, people became separated from the other people involved in their trading, in contrast to the just community, which will form God's new earth.

This capitalist economy fails to recognise that human beings are more than consumers. It devalues life outside the market. It 'cannot take into account the social dimension of man (sic).' (Berthoud 1992, 84) In the current global situation people have ceased to be citizens. Consumption in the marketplace becomes more important than participation in democracy. 'We have ceased to be citizens, whose primary duty is to build and share in the community. ... (Instead, we) have become consumers... whose primary duty it is to buy.' (Gorringer 1999, 22) This focus on consumption, to the exclusion of other forms of participation, stems from prioritising money.

The difference between treating human beings as citizens and treating them as consumers is crucial to achieving just community. 'The consumer chooses between products on the shelf... as an end user.' (Lang and Hines 1993, 109) The only choice is whether or what to buy. Those who cannot consume have no say. Addressing the citizen, on the other hand, introduces the potential to achieve participation in the building of community at all levels.

To show the imbalance of power in the market, the market can be compared to an election. 'Votes count for spending and candidates for goods and services.' (Gorringer 1994, 38<sup>4</sup>) In a democratic election, each person has one vote.<sup>5</sup> However, in the market,

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<sup>4</sup> Gorringer is quoting Peter Donaldson. 1982. *10 X Economics*. Harmondsworth, Penguin.

one person can have several votes, while another has none. Each dollar adds another vote. Thus, the situation is undemocratic. In addition, 'spending by consumers on low incomes may reflect basic needs,' while 'votes cast by those with high incomes may be the expression of trivial wants or whims.' (38) Yet the market treats each type of vote in the same way.

Power, then, is central to any discussion of economics and politics, as CEAS emphasised in its work. 'Economics is about power because wealth is power.' (Gorringe 1994, 29) Power needs to be re-recognised as a relevant factor, so that the question of its redistribution can be addressed. For example, political economy 'involves the social relationships of power among the members of a community in their attempt to earn a living.' (29) Human relations in community become the focus. Economics then can be reconsidered in the context of the political and cultural realms.

To regain the balance between citizenship and consumption, between the realms, certain ethical decisions could be taken that contrast with those presently assumed in the marketplace. Suggestions include:

1. 'to confirm that human life has a greater value than that of the market;' (Houtart 2001, vii)
2. 'to proclaim the rights of peoples as against the rights of business;' (viii) and
3. 'to embrace an ethic and a spirituality which consolidates the solidarity of all human beings, North and South.' (viii)

These decisions accept that human beings should be the focus of attention, not money. Such considerations are supported by the experience of CEAS as it deals with communities of the poorest who have no power within the economic realm. They are working to develop their power in the political realm, in concert with their multi-faith base. By prioritising people over the market, the poor can be turned back into people and money can be turned back into a thing. Instead of the rich consuming the poor, excluding them with the focus on the global market system, all human beings can become human again in the wider system.

This requires a focus on the exercise of power within structures, not just changes to the attitudes and actions of individuals. Poverty, whether economic, political, or cultural is caused by injustice, the imbalance of power between individuals and within structures. Poverty is 'the outworking of the power of some over others, and it is the nature of that relationship- of the powerful over the powerless- that it distributes wealth

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<sup>5</sup> This is not to say that democratic elections do not have their own problems, as CEAS has already explored.

to the former at the expense of the latter.’ (Elliott 1987, 15) Recalling society to a balance between citizenship and consumption can help to restore these unequal structures of power. Just relationships can become the focus of community.

CA could address the questions of economic and political power, both of which are integrated with its use of moral power. It is not enough for CA to use the power available to it, as the campaign advocates. It can ask why it has this power in the first place. ‘The world is structured to benefit rich rather than poor communities, but we can work together to redress the balance. None of us can be entrusted with too much power over others.’ (Christian Aid 2000a, 5) Living in right relation requires a balance of power, not just a benevolent use of power, which could expand the definition of poverty. This balance of power begins in local communities and expands up to the global level.

People and structures will always tend toward abusing power and accumulating power because God’s new earth is not yet fully here; sin remains. ‘To remove the mighty from their thrones and exalt the humble and meek and those of low degree is only to offer another social group the opportunity to behave like the one before, once power is in their hand.’ (Taylor 2000, 95-6) Human beings take advantage of having power. Thus, people have to work to constantly redistribute power more equally, requiring a focus on structures, keeping the end goal of the new earth in focus.

Reintroducing a focus on citizens requires further reflection on the concept from a theological perspective. This analysis could begin from the understanding of human beings working in community toward God’s new earth. This working together requires active participation. Forrester cites Philippians 3:20, ‘we are citizens of heaven.’ (Forrester 2003a, 43) Christians can learn about citizenship in this world from their citizenship in God’s kingdom.

Christians are understood to be citizens of God’s kingdom, not consumers of the kingdom. This is a crucial distinction for the discussion of working toward God’s new earth. The work is not an attempt to purchase a place in the new earth. Redemption is not purchased. However, human beings are citizens, active participants, in the struggle.

‘When we speak about citizens ... we are implying that citizens... participate in the life of the community; they co-operate; they share in decision-making; they contribute to the life of the community.’ (Forrester 2003a, 40)

In a country like Brazil where each person is a citizen, addressing this question of active citizenship can provide an opportunity for each person to participate in society rather than allowing them to be excluded. However, in order for this focus on citizenship to be

effective, the poverty and inequality present in citizenship today also has to be addressed, as the experience of CEAS has shown.

Working from the need for justice in community, various aspects of citizenship could be elaborated. As quoted in the previous chapter,

‘Democracy, as envisaged now by so many groups in Latin America, is based on the co-existence and articulation of five founding forces: participation, solidarity, equality, difference, and communion.’ (Boff 1995, 105)

Citizenship requires participation in community. There has to be solidarity in community. There has to be a working toward equality in community. There has to be diversity in community. Finally, communion too is central. Each of these elements could be further analysed in the light of faith and practice to build a model of effective citizenship. Several starting points have been illuminated in the practice of CA and CEAS.

In particular, the Eucharist could provide a starting point for Christians.

‘When the Church gathers to celebrate the Eucharist, breaking the bread and sharing the cup together, we show just a little of what it is to be the City of God, and the pattern of life that is appropriate for citizens of that city, as well as the resources that are available to citizens in their relationships and responsibilities.’ (Forrester 2003a, 47)

The sharing of consumption, power, and participation in community can provide a model for exercising power that is not based on domination in the economic, political, and civic realms.

In the celebration of the Eucharist, power is distributed equally. All who partake of the body and blood are empowered to live out community in God’s new earth. Power, in this new earth, can be shared and exercised equally in relationships. Power is to choose life over death. ‘Ideally, then, power is used to assure fruitfulness, peace, harmony, stability- all that the Old Testament understands by wholeness and holiness.’ (Elliott 1987, 120) Focusing on the active citizen begins to address the imbalance of power supported by the global market system. This does not mean that focusing on human beings as citizens alone would lead to the new earth. There is potential for idolatry in each realm, as the third chapter considered. However, a balance must be maintained between the realms.

This acceptance of the need for active citizens also does not mean that the Western conception of democracy (inextricably linked to capitalism) may be appropriate for every society. Just as with the economic system, there should be heterogeneity, not

homogeneity in the solutions proposed, acknowledging the diversity within and between communities. For example,

‘the decision-making process relies, in many non-European cultures, on consensus. It involves a slow, careful attempt to safeguard the collective harmony, whereas the Western-style of decision-making, by majority over minority, represents for them a sort of brutality, lastingly harmful to the social body.’ (Verhelst 1990, 40)

There may be other styles of government where each of the aspects of a true democracy is present from participation to communion. This life in community needs to begin at the local level. Hines has even suggested a ‘citizen’s income,’ as noted in the second chapter, where people would be able to take an active part in constructing their society politically and not just remain focused on working for money.

There has not yet been a formal elaboration of the concepts of citizenship emerging from the hermeneutic circle in communities on the ground in Brazil. Liberation theology can be challenged to return to its roots of examining the hermeneutic circle in process in communities around the world.

‘Liberation theology itself lacks any clear model of the future political state to be created by the process of liberation. It prefers to deal in a non-specific political eschatology putting the force of its argument into a prophetic denunciation of the principalities and powers, and into the religious dimension of the reign of God.’ (Linden 2000, 16-7)

Yet on the ground, this radical denunciation has practical elements as the experience of CEAS shows, which could be analysed further.

- How does this tension impact the process of action and reflection?

This new earth, present in part now but arriving fully in the future, requires human action. In order to balance the present work towards a new earth with what that new earth will look like, there has to be constant reflection on this action. This reflection can never be taken as dogma but should lead to further action and reflection, a continuing spiral of the hermeneutic circle. In this way, the spiral moves closer toward the goal of the new earth, not repeating the same mistakes but building on the experience. For example, when liberation theology first emerged, there seemed to be only two options: the American path or the Soviet path. Such is not the case today. Those who argue that liberation theology is dead, however, may treat past reflection as permanent, rather than part of a continuing process.

The starting point of the hermeneutic circle is one's own place in reality. This simple starting point has been dismissed within the development paradigm and globalisation, which assume that all people are on the same path to development. The problem with not acknowledging difference is that the concept of development with its focus on economic growth then does not make sense in other societies. Such is the case for the communities with which CEAS works.

Each community's starting point depends on their culture, many of which aim to reject the domination of the Western neoliberal economy. 'Cultural communities have their own ways of envisaging resistance to the mechanisms of domination and their own ideas about active commitment to a better society.' (Verhelst 1990, 157) One such starting point begins with relations in community rather than the individual. 'Tradition requires non-western cultures to be true to their Self,... not the 'I' of western individualism,... (which) leads to selfishness, greed, perpetual desire and cynicism.' (Sardar 1998, 274) CEAS, in particular, emphasises the importance of the community rather than the individual in terms of developing power and relationships. CA, with its myriad partners, faces the task of integrating these aspects of reflection, as do similar agencies.

At CA there is a tension between the theological reflection, which tends toward a rejection of the development paradigm and the policy, which works within the development paradigm. This reflection draws on concepts from liberation theology, which has rejected development from the outset. CA describes the gap between policy and theology as one of pragmatism versus prophecy. At the theology away day, when the question of how structures could be redeemed arose, the first response was that prophetic words, meaning extreme, 'only harden hearts.' For CA, structures do need to be redeemed. Gorringer argues similarly, but in contrast to his prophetic rejection of profit, which CEAS describes in terms of revolution, CA suggests that practically there need to be rules, regulations and limits set in the economic system that already exists. The system itself does not need to be overthrown.

In particular, CA distinguishes between pragmatic and prophetic uses of power. For Dudley, the supermarket campaign, urging availability of more Fair Trade products, was a pragmatic use of consumer power but failed to be prophetic because the campaign enshrined people into their roles as consumers. A prophetic approach would challenge the unequal power of consumers, as Gorringer does, because in God's new earth there will be no power inequality. Instead, a pragmatic approach argues for ethical use of that power. Yet, the example of CEAS shows that the balance of power in community can be

crucial for working toward the new earth. A prophetic approach does not signify an impractical approach. There are practical aspects present in the revolutionary approach. The imbalance of power does not have to be simply accepted.

The theological discussions at CA seem to support the prophetic approach but not the pragmatic one. If the difference between radical positions and the middle ground that CA advocates is presented as a distinction between prophecy and pragmatism, what exactly, does CA see as the role of prophecy? 'With the kingdom in mind, we hope we can be both prophetic and pragmatic as we attempt to be faithful.' (Dudley 2002, 8) Thus, CA wants to include prophecy and pragmatism in its reflection.

How then would the prophetic reflection impact the practice?

'As we engage in this aspect of mission, the prophetic tradition nourishes us as we identify injustices that need transformation. We try to be prophetic because we pray with the ancient prophets that God's name would be hallowed and God's will can be done on earth as it is in heaven.' (8)

The prophetic aspect is to point to what the world should become. However, 'we try to be pragmatic because millions of people need change now.' (8) Thus, the pragmatic part is to try to change small elements within the system now, to relieve the suffering of the poor, while all the while aiming toward prophetic changes in the long term. Dudley continues, 'we choose trade because we believe that it offers the chance to make the most difference to improve the lives of the poor now.' (12) Yet Gorringer and others would disagree, stating that this pragmatism is still agreeing to work within a system that worships Mammon, which will not lead to the long-term changes needed. CA is supporting the exclusion of millions. At this point, the prophetic challenges are being left to one side.

Dudley assumes that pragmatism is practical and prophecy is impractical. She argues that the prophetic work comes from systematic theologians whereas the pragmatic comes from ethicists like Taylor. 'Theologians have the responsibility to continue to provide a creative tension between the pragmatic and prophetic.' (Dudley 2000b, 4) Yet, this negates the fact that the theological reflection emerges from the hermeneutic circle. The reflection is linked to practice. This theological reflection, in the case of CA, tends toward the prophetic. A prophetic approach has practical elements too. It is not merely theoretical. 'Prophecy is the application of vision to a particular situation.' (Forrester 2003b, 117) Gorringer, Hines, and others present practical local alternatives, while at the same time urging a complete overhaul of the system. Rather than trying to set aside the

prophecy in favour of a pragmatic approach, continuing the process of action and reflection could blur the presently stark lines between the theology and the policy.

Gorringe distinguishes between ethics as the practice of wisdom or prophecy, acknowledging practical elements in both. Wisdom represents the co-ordination of Christian ethics with all forms of secular ethics. This type of ethics brings 'the total Christian understanding of life on one side face to face with the empirical situation on the other.' (Gorringe 1994, 19) Here Christians work within the existing system. CA may be located here.

Prophecy, in contrast, does not start with what is, but what should be. 'Prophecy constitutes a constant pressure on the prevailing morality.' (Gorringe 1994, 22) It points the way forward toward the new earth. It is 'an affair of the community' and 'grows from the narrative tradition.' (20-1) There are concrete proposals for ways in which things might be changed, which can be considered alongside the reformist approach.

Ethics can point to the differences between God's new earth and morality, which rules the current sinful system. Morality is defined by the current laws in place. Revelation, for Gorringe, enables the perception that the system is wrong. Ethics 'represents revelation's attack on the system.' (Gorringe 1994, 25) CA needs to be able to balance these two arms, rather than setting one aside in favour of the other.

Some Christians would call for a more extreme version of the global market system that benefits the rich. However, the Bible 'took the side of the slave, the widow, the alien, those who could not fend for themselves.' (Gorringe 1994, 27) So Christians today should prioritise the poor. Gorringe argues that there should be a

'dialectic of wisdom and prophecy. ...With the prophets it emphasises the need to follow the command of the living God, but with the Wisdom writers insists that we need the ongoing discussion of wisdom to help us discern what that is.' (27)

Christians need to be both prophetic and pragmatic, taking smaller steps in the present that will help to achieve the new earth in the future.

The tension between where CA and CEAS are located now and where they will be located in God's new earth will remain. However, where CEAS refuses to support sinful structures of power, CA works within them. It is here that reflection has to be allowed to impact action. CA cannot limit its theological critique of power to individuals. Its policy already addresses the structures. The theological reflection could follow suit. What is crucial is to refuse to allow the pragmatic approach to contradict the prophetic approach.

CA does not have to choose one arm or the other. However, it could become aware of the differences between the two and how one leads into or contradicts the other through further reflection and consideration of development theorists and theologians together. CEAS, for example, has found practical ways to merge the prophetic with daily life on the ground in these communities. CA, working on advocacy in the North faces a different set of challenges.

‘Those undertaking ‘advocacy’ in the complex arena of international economic justice are quietly dismissed as having sold-out, or been co-opted, settling, for example, for trivial concessions in international agreements, or nuanced changes in governments’ positions in international financial institutions. Or, correspondingly, those working in popular movements are dismissed as romantic revolutionaries insisting on impossible changes and addicted to high rhetoric.’ (Linden 2000, 20)

CA is trying to balance the two with its own advocacy and support of these partners. However, it is not allowing these partners’ theological reflections to influence its advocacy.

The two approaches, conscientization and advocacy, can balance each other, challenging the other to produce ways of practically working toward God’s new earth. The crucial difference between the two that has to be carefully considered is the use and abuse of power.

‘High rhetoric and revolutionary radicalism need to be tempered by a preoccupation with achieving tangible gains for the poor today, not at the revolutionary end of time. Advocacy in the corridors of power often subtly changes the consciousness of those who engage in it, generates complicity in the culture of the powerful, and needs to be tempered by the simple message of justice, brought down to earth by the voice of the poor, and illuminated with the counter-narrative message of the gospel.’ (Linden 2000, 21)

Those working toward pragmatic, reformist changes, to the systems today need to be aware of how these changes will lead to the end goal of God’s new earth. Can changes be supported that continue the imbalance of power? Is there a way to point toward the prophetic changes, as CEAS has found on the ground in Brazil? Such considerations impact the policies as the previous section on citizenship found.

The pragmatic and the prophetic approaches do not have to remain in conflict with one another. Within the discussion of charity and justice in the third chapter, charity was not rejected altogether. However, charity was subsumed within the overall consideration of justice. Charity is only needed when a situation of injustice exists. A

similar distinction can be made between the pragmatic and prophetic approaches toward change. Pragmatism, like charity, can be a useful means of moving the situation forward toward a new earth but only when subsumed within a prophetic discussion. The charitable act must be located within the larger spectrum of achieving justice. Similarly, the pragmatic act can be located within the larger spectrum of the prophetic challenge.

The final challenge then is to always be pointing toward God's new earth. Locating the hermeneutic circle in communities of the poor, as CEAS does, can help to counter this possibility. CA, from its location in the middle class in the UK, is not as focused on reducing the wealth of the rich, challenging the structures to rid themselves of power. CEAS, amongst the poor, is certain of the need for reducing the wealth of the rich. The C&C department is working toward forming links with newer churches in Britain. Many of these churches are located in communities of the poor. This could lead CA toward further reflection on poverty from the perspective of the poor, which could prove to be a fertile location for further reflection.

CA, to link its advocacy in the North and in the South, can work to discern what the spirituality of the poor is in the UK. To effectively balance the work in God's new earth today with what that new earth will become, there cannot be a distinction between us and them, the rich in the North and the poor in the South. Such a distinction does not exist in practice.

CA already argues that poor people should have a central role in policy-making. Then too they should have a central role in reflection. This returning to the communities of the poor is a challenge for agencies like CA in the North.

'Where are those communities to be found which are constituted at one and the same time by their commitment to justice for the poor and oppressed?... 'In short, the question about the possibility of a liberation theology in Britain today is the question, simply, where and in what form are we to find for ourselves what in Latin America was called, the *comunidad eclesial de base*?' (Turner<sup>6</sup> 2000, 79)

It is also a challenge for liberation theologians and other working within liberation theology in the South. As Kee asks, 'where are the black liberation theologians of Brazil?' (Kee 2000, 41) The experience of CEAS shows that there are many who are rarely asked their opinions on a world stage.

An agency like CA who merges the experiences of communities in the North and in the South can contribute further to the development of theological reflection. There

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<sup>6</sup> Denys Turner is a professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge.

can be reflection on the action. It can be made clear to all CA staff, supporters, and partners. The hermeneutic circle can be critical of policy and faith. Finally, it has the potential to influence further action.

Within liberation theology, the themes of God's new earth, justice, community, prioritising the poor, and redeeming structures can all be further developed to consider how to move forward. Yet, such reflection cannot remain solely within Christian theology, if it is to be truly inclusive.

- Can this discussion expand beyond Christianity?

The final point to be considered in the struggle toward God's new earth is how to expand this struggle beyond Christian communities.

'For a country such as Britain it would mean a new engagement with the secular as the poor of Britain include the second generation to have grown up with no knowledge of Christianity, and with a potpourri of beliefs and a do-it-yourself moral formation. This engagement could not be undertaken coherently without an equally serious search to define the Church's future role in Europe, in relation to Islam, in its responsibilities towards the 'South,' and in response to the enlargement of the European Union to the borders of the klepto-capitalism of the remnants of the old Soviet Union and its pre-Tsarist Russian Orthodox Church.' (Linden 2000, 29)

This point is particularly relevant for an agency such as CA, which draws support from such diverse communities. Practising the hermeneutic circle in communities of the poorest in the UK would mean including those outside the churches. At the same time, it would have to include all the faiths within the UK. The spirituality of the poor is not limited to the Christian faith or churches. Linking to its partners overseas the same remains true.

This new earth encompasses the material as well as spiritual realms. It can be worked toward by those of different faiths and those of no faith. CEAS recognises that the action and reflection can be both secular and spiritual. Further, secular development practitioners use spiritual terms like repentance to describe the needed changes. At the same time, the action, while not overtly theological, can stem from theological reflection. Thus, the hermeneutic circle does not have to be limited to those people involved with churches or faith-based partners.

CA, as a relief and development organisation, forms a space for people to express their faith outwith a formal church setting. In fact, CA itself is addressing question of how to engage with Christians who do not attend church. Further, the campaigns and other engagements with the public are not limited to Christians but aim to include all UK citizens.

Leaving the hermeneutic circle as an informal occurrence at CA means limiting it to those who are Christian. CA cannot and does not want to require its staff members to be Christian. Staff members, however, do have to support CA's mandate. If there is a distinction then between departments, with one having Christian staff members and another having secular staff members, then only part of the organisation is involved in the hermeneutic circle and the project will continue to stagnate. If theology is defined as the action of faith-based individuals or of a faith-based organisation then policy and theology are integrated with Christian staff members. However, if there is no co-ordination of the process of action and reflection then the non-Christian staff members will not be able to participate in the integration of theology and policy at CA.

At the same time, the hermeneutic circle does not have to be limited to Christian organisations, as the example of CEAS shows. Those of any faith can participate in such a process, even if the faith is humanist or an undefined spirituality. This action reflection process links the spiritual, economic, political and social realms.

'Religious groups have to find in their traditions and in inter-religious dialogue values and attitudes that will permit them to assume in a creative and humanising way the new global economic, social and cultural conditions.' (Serrano<sup>7</sup> 2001, 31)

The hermeneutic circle will also lead to differences among and between communities, which will have to be addressed, as the previous chapters showed. However, these differences already exist. What the hermeneutic circle introduces is a means of dealing with difference. It does so by building on the experience of the poor as we struggle together toward God's new earth.

The aim of this thesis was to describe the method of the hermeneutic circle, its implementation by the two agencies, and the analysis of reality and of faith that emerges from this method. It then pointed to ways forward for the integration of liberation theology and development from the experiences of these two agencies. I used the hermeneutic circle as part of my methodology in this thesis deliberately, as it was the

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<sup>7</sup> Josep Serrano is an economist, theologian, and member of the Board of *Cristianisme I Justícia*.

method used by CA and CEAS in their work. I began with participant observation, analysed the qualitative data, and then analysed the steps in the hermeneutic circle in the writing up.

To remain faithful to the method, I was careful to use the theologians with whom CA and CEAS were already engaging. Similarities, differences, contradictions, and ways forward were all analysed. For example, Wink, referred to frequently at CA, was extremely useful to expand out the discussion of principalities and powers. What has emerged is not a systematic theology, but an issue-based theology, and its methodology.

This theology and methodology came from the experiences of CA staff members, their supporters, the UK churches, and one overseas partner. From the research this thesis created and presented experience-based practical theology. The theological analysis began with experience and suggests further implications for praxis. Thus, parts of the thesis may also be of use to the communities studied. However, the thesis itself is a work of practical theology, analysing the hermeneutic circle and its struggle toward God's new earth.

The use of the liberation theology method of the hermeneutic circle to integrate faith and practice may allow the data and its analysis to be used, not only in academic settings to further research, but also by practitioners who hope to implement this method in their own work. In this circle of action and reflection, reality is analysed, set alongside the faith, the faith is analysed, and then the community decides how to appropriate this reflection into further action. In this case, the reality analysed was poverty and development. It was set alongside the struggle toward God's new earth. Both of these are subjected to suspicion in the light of the other. This conclusion then has suggested ways forward for appropriation of this reflection.

Further analysis of this research and each of its emerging concepts by development theorists and theologians could deepen the reflection. At the same time, practitioners, like CA staff members, could analyse the emerging praxis from their perspectives. CA has already put into place some strategies to encourage further theological reflection in the organisation, such as expanding the theology working group. Further engagement with the International department, including the overseas partners could deepen this theological reflection. So too could dedicated staff time for reflection or for the formal reporting and co-ordination of this reflection. With a fully implemented hermeneutic circle, CA could draw together the threads of the reflection by staff, supporters, churches and overseas partners. It could then allow this reflection to impact policy and practice.

Having begun with the question of a Christian contribution to (post-) development practice, we now end with the challenge of expanding the hermeneutic circle to include the spirituality of the poor in whatever form it may take. CA follows the method of the hermeneutic circle, as it attempts to allow spirituality and reality to reflect critically on each other. Further analysis of this hermeneutic circle, alongside fuller implementation can deepen the emerging concepts, engaging the communities in the North and in the South.

These emerging concepts centre on the struggle toward God's new earth where justice will rule. Justice requires right relationships between human in community, the prioritisation of the poor, and a reduction in the wealth (and power) of the rich. The practice of agencies like CA then aims at rebuilding human relationships and redeeming structures to work toward God's new earth.

The tension between the present and the future incarnations of this new earth will remain, challenging agencies like CA to consistently reflect on its action. It also challenges theologians and development theorists to allow the hermeneutic circle, and in particular, praxis, to impact theory. In God's new earth humans will be fully human; they will actively participate as citizens of the kingdom. This aspect of responsible citizenship can be further explored to deepen the contribution that spirituality is making to (post-) development practice. Introducing a balance between citizenship and consumption can include those who are currently excluded, turning the focus from money back to people in community and to God. These and other changes can be considered through further implementation of the hermeneutic circle in communities of the poorest around the world.

## Appendix



Map of Brazil with Major Cities

Available from <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/print/br.html>



Map of Brazil with State Borders  
Available from [http://www.theodora.com/maps/brazil\\_map.html](http://www.theodora.com/maps/brazil_map.html)



## Glossary of Concepts

Base Ecclesial Communities	These communities grew out of the Catholic churches in Latin America in the 1960s. 'They are small groups that come together for Bible study, liturgy, and social action, usually without a priest but with trained leaders. Smaller than parishes, they represent the 'base' of society. They are the operational base of liberation theology in practice.' (Boff and Boff 1987, 10)
Capitalism	'An economic system in which wealth is owned by private individuals or businesses and goods produced for exchange, according to the dictates of the market.' (Heywood 1992, 311) It focuses on private ownership and regulation through the market rather than the state.
Civil Society	'A realm of autonomous associations and groups, formed by private citizens and enjoying independence from the government; includes businesses, clubs, families and so on. A 'private' sphere of life in contrast to the 'public' sphere of government and the state.' (Heywood 1992, 311)
Conscientization	'Refers to the process in which men (sic), not as recipients, but as knowing subjects achieve a deepening awareness both of the sociocultural reality that shapes their lives and of their capacity to transform that reality.' (Freire 1985, 93 n.2)
Liberalisation	'Relaxing and eventually removing many regulations and restrictions on economic activity, both domestic and international, in the name of efficiency. Examples include import quotas and tariffs, import licences, state monopolies, price fixing, implicit or hidden subsidies, restrictions on the repatriation of profits by foreign-owned firms.' (Simon 2002, 88).
Localisation	'A process which reverses the trend of globalization by discriminating in favour of the local.' (Hines 2000, 27) Such discrimination takes place in the economic and political realms.
Modernisation	'The process of social and political change through which the industrialised West came about; the emergence of a capitalist economic order and a liberal democratic political system.' (Heywood 1992, 311)
Neoliberalism	'Economic liberalism, or neo-liberalism... advocates that the frontiers of the state be rolled back and proclaims the virtues of private enterprise, the free market and individual responsibility. ... Neo-liberals support an extreme form of individualism which leaves little room for the public services or the provision of social welfare.' (Heywood 1994, 11)
North	'The richer, more industrialized countries mainly in the temperate northern hemisphere.' (Chambers 1993, xvi)

Privatisation	‘The selling-off of state enterprises and parastatal corporations... in order to reduce direct economic activity and resource use by the state.’ (Simon 2002, 88) The enterprises become privately owned.
South	In contrast to the definition by Chambers of the North, the South is composed of those poorer less industrialised countries often found near the equator or in the southern hemisphere.
Transnational or Multinational Corporation	‘An international... corporation with headquarters in one country but branch offices in a wide range of both developed and developing countries. Examples include General Motors, Coca-Cola, Firestone, Philips, Renault, British Petroleum, Exxon, and ITT.’ (Todaro 1994, 690)

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Much of the discussion in this thesis comes from fieldwork diaries kept throughout the period from October 1999 to October 2002. The fieldwork diaries were kept every day I worked with CA and CEAS throughout this period in Edinburgh, London, and Salvador Brazil. They are available upon request.

There were also 29 interviews with staff and key volunteers, who have each been guaranteed anonymity. They are listed below by date and location.

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