

Justice and Mission

Issue 35 Editors: Andy and Carol Kingston-Smith

A warm welcome to this edition of Encounters. A number of topics are considered which highlight the central role of justice in contemporary mission. Living in an increasingly interconnected and complex world requires of us an acute awareness of issues at both local and global levels and how they are likely to play out in each new context. We trust that this edition will contribute to sharpening your thinking and vision for mission in our world today. Please take the opportunity to interact with us we seek to grow together in the understanding and application of Jesus' ministry mandate of bringing "... good news to the poor...freedom for the prisoners...recovery of sight for the blind, set[ting] the oppressed free [and announcing]...the year of the Lord's favour." (Luke 4: 18-19).



The first article by Dr Dewi Hughes reviews the way in which principles of biblical justice influenced the missionary endeavours of William Carey. Dewi reminds us that the question is not, to what extent should justice become a key element in mission, but rather, assuming its centrality, why have issues of justice not remained at the forefront of mission? In the response, Dr Jonathan Ingleby challenges us to consider whether our eschatology is sufficiently well-(in)formed. He suggests that the way we approach matters of justice is, to some degree at least, influenced by how we conceive and live in the light of our understanding of biblical eschatology.

The third article by Carol Kingston-Smith draws on our mission experiences in Bolivia in a thought-provoking and challenging critique of how we engage in matters of compassion and justice globally; taking into account local contexts and their histories, with an understanding of how macro-level economic, socio-political and cultural factors are influencing and having significant repercussions on these contexts. A central question is whether acts of compassion can sometimes stall the establishment of justice.

An important test for our theorising about justice is, of course, how it is achieved in practice. A number of leaders, engaged in cross-cultural ministries, have contributed their thoughts and experiences. Helen Sworn's dialogue discloses the heart-wrenching, yet vital, work of Chab Dai, in advocacy, intervention and training, and its key role in advising the Cambodian Government on combatting the evils of sex-trafficking. Based in the UK, Rachel Davies further examines the role of the Christian community in advocating on behalf of victims of trafficking. She explains CARE's UK work in parliamentary lobbying for just laws at both national and European Union levels.

Micah Network's International Director, Sheryl Haw, shares her observations on the interplay between justice and holistic mission, and supports the necessity of training future missionaries enabled to interface appropriately across inter-cultural contexts.

Tearfund's Ben Niblett exhorts us to both consider and act on the important issue of climate change. Ben unpacks how environmental degradation is affecting millions, most particularly those who have done the least to contribute to the environmental damage; the poor in the Global South.

No theme of justice can ignore economic issues, and Ian Meredith, turns our attention to issues of trade. He exposes some of the realities and problems of Fairtrade and suggests that we can do better in establishing 'just trade'. Economic issues are also at the heart of poverty-fuelled violence in Muhabura, Uganda. The Rt. Rev. Cranmer Mugisha, Bishop of the Diocese of Muhabura provides us with a profile of the struggles the Church faces there. Finally, Tim Davy provides a succinct book review of *In His image*, written by Oasis' International Director, Andy Matheson.

In conclusion, let us mention that at Redcliffe we are currently working on new initiatives in areas of justice and integral mission. We will share more in the early months of the New Year but in the meantime please contact us if you have a particular interest in the subject-matter covered by this edition at akingstonsmith@redcliffe.org and ckingstonsmith@redcliffe.org.

Andy & Carol

Andy and Carol Kingston-Smith are both Lecturers in Mission at Redcliffe.

- **[Article 1](#): Global Mission and Justice – Snapshots from History.**
(Dr Dewi Hughes, 5148 words)
 - **[Article 2](#): Justice and Eschatology – A Response to Dr Dewi Hughes.**
(Dr Jonathan Ingleby, 1164 words)
 - **[Article 3](#): Caring Wisely in a Globalised World.**
(Carol Kingston-Smith, 4298 words)
 - **[Article 4](#): Bodies for Sale: Globalised Trafficking for the Sex Trade - An Interview with Helen Sworn, founder of Chab Dai, Cambodia.**
(Carol Kingston-Smith (ed.), 1758 words)
 - **[Article 5](#): Speaking up for Justice - Connecting Church and Government.**
(Rachel Davies, 1469 words)
 - **[Article 6](#): Do Justice, Love Mercy and Walk Humbly - An interview with Sheryl Haw, International Director, Micah Network.**
(Andy Kingston-Smith (ed.), 1419 words)
 - **[Article 7](#): Act now! Inspiring Churches to act on Climate Justice.**
(Ben Niblett, 4400 words)
 - **[Article 8](#): Is Fairtrade the Same as Just Trade? A Direct Trade Perspective.**
(Ian Meredith, 1162 words)
 - **[Article 9](#): A Case Study of Relational Justice and Patterns of Familial Violence - Muhabura District, Uganda.**
(The Rt. Rev. Cranmer Mugish, 1144 words)
 - **[Book Review](#): In His Image: Understanding and Embracing the Poor.**
(by Andy Matheson; Authentic Lifestyle)
-

Go to the Encounters website at www.redcliffe.org/encounters to read what others are thinking on the Discussion Board. Use the Voice your comments form to add to the debate.

*Please Note: The views expressed in articles are those of their authors
and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.*

© Redcliffe College www.redcliffe.org

Global Mission and Justice – Snapshots from History



Dr Dewi Hughes, Theological Advisor, Tearfund

The article below is an edited version of the lectures given by Dr. Hughes at the Redcliffe College World Christianity Lecture delivered at Redcliffe College on 9th November 2010 (ed.)

Introduction

If the recent Lausanne Congress in Cape Town is a barometer there is much interest in global justice issues among Evangelicals these days. I was involved with the Lausanne Theology Working Group and on day two especially, we considered the theme of 'Building the Peace of Christ in our Divided and Broken World.'

In a Newsletter of ACEV [North East Brazil] received today – a Pentecostal denomination and long term partner of Tearfund, this was said: 'This coming weekend will see hundreds of our youth gather for their annual congress held at Green Pastures with the theme: "Thirst for Justice"'

Some questions that may pop into your mind as you encounter my topic:-

- Why this interest in justice?
- Is this interest the result of a change in theological outlook among Evangelicals?
- In what sense is working for justice a part of the mission of the church?
- Is there a danger that the interest in justice issues will distract the church from its crucial global mission of saving souls from their sin through faith in the atoning death of Christ? It grieves me to include this question, but it is still being asked. [1]

I am going to focus on some very practical manifestations of this interest in the second half of this lecture [2]. But first I want to do some historical and theological reflection on the topic. The reason for doing this is to prove that the passion for justice that is being manifested among evangelicals today is no 'strange fire' in our tradition. To the contrary the 'strange fire' is the lack of passion for justice.

William Carey and the Serampore community

For the 200 years or so drama of the modern Evangelical missions movement there have always been key actors who have seen a close link between global mission and justice. William Carey, who can justifiably be called the father of the movement, is a good case in point.

In February 1801 Carey and his associates in Serampore, India wrote the following in a letter to Dr J.T. van der Kemp in South Africa,

Cold reason alone would suggest that a world so beautiful and in so many ways so plainly under the government of God, cannot for ever be the sphere of oppression, sedition, slavery and war, and would incite us to hasten the reign of righteousness and peace. Nevertheless we have little sure hope of this being accomplished till we read the divine promises and consider the pledge of their fulfilment in the death of our adorable Redeemer. Then firm rock is felt beneath our feet and we know that the earth shall be filled with God's glory, as the waters cover the seas.' [3]

Here we have a letter from a group of English missionaries working in India to a Dutch fellow missionary working with the London Missionary Society in South Africa referring to slavery that had its evil heart in the Caribbean. The context is global and the passion for justice in this context of global mission is clearly evident. That the ground of hope of a more just world is the atoning death of Christ is proof of the thoroughly evangelical credentials of the missionaries. The reference to Isaiah 11:9 with which the quotation ends points to the biblical and theological grounds for their hope. [4]

This wonderful description of the just and peaceful reign of the Messiah was deeply significant for Carey and his associates as inheritors of a Puritan eschatology that had been set alight by the flames of the Great Awakening. There were a number of factors motivating Carey and his fellow Baptist pastors into overseas mission but what has been called 'the Puritan hope' figured prominently among them. This was the lens through which they read Isaiah 11. They believed that Christ's kingdom was bound to be set up over the face of the whole earth and that the earth and its peoples would enjoy a long period of peace and tranquillity [the millennium] before the Lord Jesus would return in glory. For those who like to put people into pigeon holes most of the founders and pioneers of the modern Evangelical missionary movement – including the Wesleyan Methodists - were post-millennialists.

There is ample proof that the Northampton fraternity of Baptists that founded the Baptist Missionary Society in 1793 had drunk deeply at the well of this Puritan hope. In April 1784 an evangelical Church of Scotland minister, John Erskine, sent a copy of Jonathan Edwards's *Humble Attempt* to the Baptist pastor John Ryland in Northampton. [5]

Just a couple of quotes will give you the strong sense of hope that there is in this volume for the successful extension of Christ's rule over the earth before his Second Coming,

It is evident from the Scripture, that there is yet remaining a great advancement of the interest of religion and the kingdom of Christ in this world, by an abundant

outpouring of the Spirit of God, far greater and more extensive than ever yet has been... It is often foretold..., that there should a time come, when all the nations, throughout the whole habitable world, should embrace the true religion. It is natural and reasonable to suppose, that the whole world should finally be given to Christ, as one whose right it is to reign... [6]

The whole point of Edwards' book written in the wake of the experience of the Great Awakening was to fan the flames of revival through concerted prayer so that the impact of the revival would expand over the whole earth. That great things had happened was encouraging Edwards and many others involved with the Great Awakening to think that even greater things were about to happen – and that they could by prayer at least move matters in the right direction.

Ryland passed the book along to his fellow pastors in the Northampton Association of Strict Baptists and one of them, John Sutcliff, re-published it in 1789. As a result a prayer meeting was established and in 1793 Sutcliff became one of the founders of the BMS. Carey refers to the monthly prayer meeting that had been inspired by Jonathan Edwards' book in his famous *Enquiry* published in 1792. What he lists as possible results of 'extraordinary' prayer is very interesting,

The churches that have engaged in the practice have in general since that time been evidently on the increase;... there are calls to preach the gospel in many places where it has not been usually published; yea, a glorious door is opened,...,by the spread of civil and religious liberty, accompanied also by the diminution of the spirit of popery [this is a reference to the French revolution – a cause of joy to the then republican Carey]; a noble effort has been made to abolish the inhuman Slave-Trade, and though at present it has not been so successful as might be wished... In the meantime it is a satisfaction to consider that the late defeat of the abolition of the Slave-Trade has proved the occasion of a praise worthy effort to introduce a free settlement, at Sierra Leone, on the coast of Africa,... [7]

The integral/holistic view of what is meant by the extension of Christ's kingdom on earth in this quote from the *Enquiry* is very striking. Church growth, new evangelistic opportunities, increase in civil and religious liberty, political campaigning against slavery and commercial activity to improve the lot of West Africans is included as evidence of the 'success of the gospel' [*Enquiry* p. 79] as a result of prayer.

Up to this point William Carey is still on English soil so it may be worth considering before going any further what happened to his principles when he eventually put them into practice in India.

The most striking testimony to his integral approach is probably found in the first chapter of a little book by Ruth and Vishal Mangalwadi entitled *William Carey: A Tribute by an Indian Woman*. [8] An imaginary quiz master at the finals of the All India Universities' competition asks the best informed students 'Who was William Carey?' Students from different disciplines answer. Here is just a taste of what follows:-

- A science student says that William Carey was a botanist who,

Published the first books on science and natural history in India such as *Flora Indica*, because he believed the biblical view, 'All thy works praise thee, O Lord.' Carey believed that nature is declared 'good', by its Creator; it is not maya (illusion) to be shunned, but a subject worthy of human study...'

- An economics major says that Carey was the first to introduce the 'concept of a savings bank to India to fight the all-pervasive social evil of usury.'
- A medical student says that he was the first man to lead a 'campaign for humane treatment of leprosy patients' in India'.
- A student of printing technology says that he was 'the father of printing technology in India.'
- The student of mass communication says that he 'established the first newspaper ever printed in any Oriental language.'
- A student of agriculture says that he was the founder of the Indian Agri-Horticultural Society in the 1820s – 30 years before the Royal Agricultural Society was established in England.
- The student of education says that he 'began dozens of schools for Indian children of all castes and launched the first college in India in Serampore.'
- The social science student says that he was the,

First man to stand against both the ruthless murders and widespread diabolical oppression of women. In the India of his day...He published... reports in order to raise public opinion and protest both in Bengal and England...It was Carey's persistent battle against Sati for 25 years, which finally, led to Lord Bentick's famous Edict in 1829, banning one of the most abominable practices in the world: widow burning.

The quiz carries on in this vein for a few pages more as we become more and more amazed at the breadth and depth of this one missionary's understanding of what it could mean to fill the Indian sub-continent with the knowledge of the Lord. And just to put the mind of some of you at ease he also consistently and incessantly proclaimed the gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus throughout his time in India – and as you probably know he was instrumental in translating or publishing the Bible – or parts of the Bible – into around 40 Indian languages!

In 1805 the missionary community that had by then become established in Serampore drew up a covenant that was to become the basis of their work together, and which they agreed to solemnly re-commit to at least once a year, maybe three times. They had decided that in order to fulfil their calling they had to be profoundly committed to one another in their great cause. They were very serious about being a real Christian community. They saw no hope of impacting India without being a church that bears comparison with the church described in Acts 2 & 4.

The terms of this covenant would satisfy the most ardent supporter of the Gospel Coalition today. Take this statement from the first paragraph,

It becomes us to fix in our minds the awful doctrine of eternal punishment, and to realize frequently the inconceivably awful conditions of this vast country, lying in the arms of the wicked one. If we have not this awful sense of the value of souls, it is impossible that we can feel aright in any other part of our work, and in this case it had been better for us to have been in any other situation than in that of a Missionary.' [9]

The intensity of their commitment to proclaiming the gospel led them to eschew private property for the sake of the cause. This is the last paragraph of the covenant,

Finally, let us give ourselves up unreservedly to this glorious cause. Let us never think that our time, our gifts, our strength, our families, or even the clothes we wear, are our own. Let us sanctify ourselves for His work! Let us ever shut out the idea of laying up a dowry for ourselves or our children. If we give up the resolution which was formed on the subject of private trade, when we first united at Serampore, the Mission from that hour is a lost cause. A worldly spirit, quarrels and every evil work will succeed the moment it is admitted that each brother may do something on his own account. Woe to that man who shall ever make the smallest movement toward such a measure. Let us continually watch against a worldly spirit, and cultivate a Christian indifference towards every indulgence. Rather let us bear hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and endeavour to learn in every state to be content. If in this way we are enabled to glorify God, with our bodies and spirits which are His, - our wants will be His care.

No private family ever enjoyed a greater portion of happiness, even in the most prosperous gale of worldly prosperity than we have done since we resolved to have all things in common, and that no one should pursue his business for his own exclusive advantage. If we are enabled to persevere in the same principles, we may hope that multitudes of converted souls will have reason to bless God to all eternity for sending His Gospel into this country.

I am convinced that Carey and his associates would have been puzzled by the heated arguments over evangelism and social action in the last half century. For them the kingdom of Jesus the Messiah was a kingdom of justice and peace that they expected would be established on earth to a great extent before the return of Jesus and the final judgment. That the gospel could be advanced in the world without reference to the establishment of just social relationships was inconceivable. So they worked with all their might for the betterment of the human condition in every sense; physical, social, psychological and spiritual. A global messianic kingdom was inconceivable to them without global justice. I believe that this approach prevailed for most of the Nineteenth Century. [10]

Eschatology, Theology and the Kingdom of God

The abandonment of the Puritan hope was crucial in leading to the divorce of evangelism and social action in the Twentieth Century. It was not the only factor I am sure. The progressivism of social Darwinism, the optimism of liberal idealism and the horrors of the First World War made it more difficult to cling to the Puritan hope. But the most crucial factor was probably the triumph of pre-millennialism especially among the technocratic and fundamentalist Evangelicals of the US. Pre-millennialism is the polar opposite of post-millennialism in its attitude to the future prospects of the rule of Christ on earth.

All we can expect before the return of Christ is for things to get worse and worse; with even the church itself becoming more and more corrupt. I remember vividly preaching on the parables of the mustard seed and leaven in a Brethren Assembly as a student and being told in no uncertain terms that my more Puritan interpretation of the parables as referring to the growth of the benign influence of the Kingdom in the world was completely wrong.

'Leaven' I was told always refers to sin/evil in the Bible and what Jesus had in mind in his parable was the growth of evil in the world after his time. Any vestige of Christ's rule/kingdom would be drained from the earth until Jesus returned to establish His Kingdom at the beginning of the millennium. In this way the Kingdom was banished from the earth, the church as a holy community was declared an impossibility and the two key Christian tasks became rescuing individuals for heaven and restoring the Jews to the land of Israel.

Ironically His future rule over a reconstituted Jewish nation in the land of Israel became the only place where Jesus was expected to have any meaningful contact with the earth between now and the final judgment. In such a context social justice was no concern of Christians.

Some of the consequences of adopting this position were highlighted on the day off of the recent Lausanne Congress in Cape Town when I spent a morning with the Reconciliation Group in the company of the Methodist bishop, Peter Storey. He was pastor of the Methodist Church in District 6 when it had been declared a 'white only' district, chaplain to the prison on

Robben Island and an active opponent of apartheid. He explained that the churches of South Africa were divided three ways on the issue of apartheid. The Dutch Reformed Church provided the theological underpinning for it; the denominations linked to the World Council of Churches opposed it and the Evangelicals, including Pentecostals, said that it had nothing to do with them. There were individual Evangelicals that stood bravely against apartheid but the movement as a whole was resolutely neutral refusing to dirty its hands with some of the most brutal injustices ever seen on earth! I have to admit that my memory will not absolve me from having to admit that that Evangelical position was also my position in the 60s. As I went around the District 6 museum that is now housed in the church building where Peter Storey served from 1966-71 I felt deep shame.

But I was never a pre-millennialist. I am from good Welsh Calvinistic stock but, amazingly, by the middle of the Twentieth Century even many Calvinists had rejected social action as a legitimate Christian concern. This was in reaction to the Social Gospel and a brilliant example of a bad argument being answered by an even worse one. Reducing the Kingdom of Christ to Social Action was the very bad argument of the Social Gospel movement. Answering that bad argument by saying that the Kingdom of Christ has nothing to do with social justice was an even worse argument. The way the Calvinist pietists did this was by reducing the Kingdom of Christ to a matter of individualistic spiritual experience that banished the influence of the Kingdom of Christ from the earth as effectively as it had been banished by the pre-millennialists. I became convinced that this position was unbiblical and un-Calvinistic in the 70s and it has been one of my deepest frustrations that my Calvinistic friends have been and remain most sceptical and critical of the ministry of Tearfund. But this is going ahead a little.

The fact remains that in the late 60s and 70s that I, along with many other Evangelicals, changed my mind on issues of justice. I became convinced that active involvement with justice issues was a biblical and theological imperative. I believe that this was a truly evangelical change because it was driven by growth in biblical understanding. This story is well told for the US in Russell D. Moore's book. [11]

The thesis of the book is that since the end of the Second World War a new consensus on the nature of the Kingdom of God has developed among Evangelicals that provides a sound foundation for Evangelical social engagement. It begins with a short chapter focusing on the challenge to Evangelicals in Carl Henry's *Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*, published in 1947, to develop a more adequate theology of the Kingdom. [12]

As I have already intimated, by the middle of the Twentieth Century the reduction of the Kingdom to the amelioration of social ills by the Social Gospel movement had led to two main reactions from fundamentalist Evangelicals. On one hand the dispensationalists had made the coming of the Kingdom an entirely future event while on the other hand the Reformed saw it as an entirely spiritual reality. Both these streams led to Evangelical isolationism where social engagement was concerned. What Carl Henry did was challenge

Evangelicalism to develop a more adequate theology of the Kingdom that would enable Evangelicals to re-engage with public affairs. This is why the movement associated with him was called neo-evangelicalism.

Moore describes how more profound biblical and theological study has led both dispensationalists and Reformed covenantalists to modify their understanding of the Kingdom in a way that makes it necessary to accommodate social action. Crucial to this change was George Eldon Ladd's convincing case for the 'already and not yet' understanding of the Kingdom. [13]

Theologically what this meant was that the coming of the Kingdom was inextricably linked with the coming of the Christ/Messiah. If the Kingdom means the rule of the messianic King since the King has already come and as a result of his redemptive work has been given all authority in heaven and earth it must follow that where the authority of the King is recognized the Kingdom is already present. Many on the Reformed side have come to recognize the strongly 'political' language of biblical eschatology and now accept that the present rule of Messiah Jesus has strong social implications while we wait for the full revelation of His rule in his second coming.

A number of significant dispensationalist theologians have also taken the 'already/not yet' understanding on board even though that has very significant implications for their understanding of eschatology. For example, the severe division between the age of the church and the age of the Kingdom is no longer tenable. If Jesus is already ruling then something of the reality of the Kingdom must be present now in the age of the church and the popular dispensationalist image of the church as a rescue boat cannot possibly be adequate. To quote Moore, 'Believers cannot have the option of inaction against judicial abuses since they are presently ruled by One whom the Scriptures describe as judging his subjects with fairness and equity' (p. 70). Moore does recognize, however, that the immense popularity of books like *Late Great Planet Earth* and the *Left Behind* series suggests that the shift among dispensationalist theologians has a long way to go to impact the dispensationalist camp within Evangelicalism as a whole.

In reflecting on what has happened in the last 50 years on this side of the Atlantic I do not think that Moore gives enough credit to the increasing emphasis on resurrection in Evangelical eschatological thinking. The attack on the influence of Greek dualism on Evangelical eschatological thinking that has led to greater appreciation of the holistic/integral nature of the Christian hope has been very significant in the UK. If our eternal hope for the reign of our Lord is holistic/integral then our present life under his authority has to be holistic/integral as well. Here again thinking has been transformed by New Testament studies.

In his third chapter, '*Toward a Kingdom Soteriology: Salvation as Holistic and Christological*', Moore begins by defending Carl Henry and the 'neo-evangelicals' against the charge that

they led Evangelicalism in the direction of the Social Gospel. Henry and his associates never questioned the fundamentals of Evangelicalism even in its fundamentalist form. They fully embraced, for example, the Evangelical and fundamentalist doctrines of the authority of the Bible, the universal sinfulness of humanity, atonement through penal substitution and the physical return of Jesus Christ in glory. What they did was challenge evangelical fundamentalists to consider the implications of the lordship of Christ over the lives of believers in the here and now. If the 'already' lordship of Christ is at the heart of what it means to be saved then dispensationalists must modify their conception of the people over whom Jesus Christ rules. Classic dispensationalism believes that there are two peoples of God, Israel and Christians from the nations, with two distinct futures; Israel's future being physical and Christians from the nations being spiritual/heavenly. Convinced by Ladd's argument significant dispensational theologians are now arguing for a unified people of God under the authority of Jesus living out the life of the Kingdom to a certain extent in the world now.

The idea of living the life of the Kingdom in the present age was never a problem for the Reformed side of the argument and they had no need to modify their spiritual understanding of salvation either. What they needed was to appreciate the wider canvas of God's purpose on which the story of an individual's salvation is played out. As we put it in Tearfund's Statement of Faith they needed to appreciate that 'God's plan for the universe is to bring about, through Jesus Christ, a transformed creation wholly governed by God, from which all evil and suffering will be banished and in which God will live with redeemed humanity for ever.' When individual salvation is seen in the context of God's cosmic purpose in Christ then its meaning cannot possibly be confined within an isolationist pietism. Social action becomes a necessity.

I was quite excited by the time I came to chapter 4 in Moore's book, *'Toward a Kingdom ecclesiology: the church as kingdom community'*. The quote from Stanley Hauerwas with which the chapter begins whetted my appetite further: "One of the most important questions you can ask theologians is where they go to church" (p. 131). Sadly, I found the chapter somewhat disappointing. Many good things are said, especially in describing the challenge that Henry and Ladd provided for Evangelical isolationism in the context of ecclesiology. Moore is in no doubt that the church as a manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ must model just living to the world but his focus is more on how the church can distinguish itself from the world rather than on what it does in the world.

I agree that the church needs to be countercultural but there is far more to that than baptism by immersion and church discipline! Maybe I expected too much but I would think that if the church is a manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ that the implications of that for how the church is in the world is as crucial an issue as how to distinguish the church from the world. But at least the new consensus on the Kingdom as Moore sees it is a consensus that the church should be in the world, though not of it, on the side of social justice.

We are probably in the early days of working out what it means for the church to be on the side of justice but significant justice movements have emerged in the Evangelical community in the last 20 years or so.

Conclusion

It is interesting to note, that as Evangelicalism launched into global mission at the end of the Eighteenth Century, it was also almost united on an issue of global justice, namely slavery. Evangelicals became involved in a host of other justice issues in the Nineteenth Century – education, health-care, banking, employment/employment law, animal welfare etc. – but the desire to abolish slavery united Evangelicals across international boundaries like no other cause (the main exception being Evangelicals in the south of the US).

Is it possible that there is a just cause that unites Evangelical Christians in the same way today? The terrible scandal of the absolute poverty of around a billion people could be the defining justice issue of our generation.

The key question in the context of the topic of this lecture – global mission and justice is; what does it mean for us as church to live under the rule of Jesus Messiah now, as we wait for the full revelation of His glory in the new heaven and earth? It must mean testifying to who Jesus is, as the designated ruler of all following His resurrection and ascension. But it must also mean seeking to transform the world in accordance with His will and in His strength.

In the context of the world in which we live we have opportunity to seek justice for the poor of the earth on a scale unknown before. Justice is fundamentally about the right exercise of power and there has never been a time when even ordinary people like you and me can have access to power. Maybe the Puritans were right and we can look forward to the earth being filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. But if that is to happen churches are going to need to be just people. Maybe we have much to learn from the Serampore community in this context as well!

Notes

[1] Witness John Piper's outburst at Lausanne.

[2] The second half of the lecture has not been re-produced, except for a small section which forms the conclusion above (ed.).

[3] S. Pearce Carey, *William Carey*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1923 p. 202.

[4] Isaiah 11:9 is the last verse in the first of two poems in Isaiah 11 that describe the wonderful reign of the Messiah (the shoot of Jesse).

[5] The full title of the book that had been originally published in 1748 was – *An humble attempt to promote the agreement and union of God's people throughout the world in extraordinary prayer for a revival of religion and the advancement of God's kingdom on earth, according to scriptural promises and prophecies of the last time.*

[6] Edwards, *Works*, Vol. 2, p. 284 [col. 2] – 285 [col.1].

[7] *Enquiry*, pp. 79-80.

[8] New Delhi: Good Books, 1993.

[9] www.christianhistorytimeline.com/pdf/serampore.pdf.

[10] This is not to say that they got things right all the time. Their integral approach tended to assume that the impact of Christianity on their own culture meant that their culture was, by definition, superior to the culture of those to whom they ministered. Their view of providence also meant that they saw Western hegemony as part of God's purpose to spread the gospel. They were also rather too optimistic about the beneficial influence of commerce.

[11] Entitled *The Kingdom of Christ: the New Evangelical Perspective*, Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004.

[12] Interestingly Henry's little book was published the year I was born so the development of the new consensus has happened through my whole lifetime!

[13] Ladd was actually building on the foundations laid by German NT scholars like Kümmel.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) discussion board.

Justice and Eschatology – A Response to Dr Dewi Hughes

Dr Jonathan Ingleby, Honorary Fellow, Redcliffe College

Dr Hughes' Redcliffe Lecture, 'Global Mission and Justice' raises, in the context of justice, the long and difficult debate concerning Biblical eschatology. Does post-millennialism (the 'Puritan Hope') actually work? Are we really in the process of establishing 'the peaceable kingdom'? What about Isaiah 11 with its sweeping promises? Is this simply a vision of the millennial reign *after* the return of Christ, that is, are the pre-millennialists essentially right? What then do we do about justice issues in the here and now?

William Carey's case is both inspiring and perplexing. His vision was truly magnificent and in some ways he lived it out – see the range of achievements associated with the Serampore fellowship as described by Dr Hughes. But even here hard realism demands that we take notice of the fact that the long-term effects were limited. His 'kingdom community' was undoubtedly 'a sign of the kingdom' but this is not quite the same thing as leaven that is destined to spread until it 'leavens the *whole* lump' (Matthew 13:33). As far as India is concerned while we can still hope for signs of the kingdom (and these to be given not only by churches and mission organisations) will India 'be won for Christ' as Dr Hughes suggests still might be possible? If this question itself sounds faithless, what about past claims that the kingdom of Christ had indeed been established on a territorial and universal basis? For example, the Holy Roman Empire in Western Europe thought of itself in this way. The truth is, however, that the idea of Christendom lies in disarray, and nobody is making such claims today. Indeed many Christians view the passing of the idea of Christendom with relief.

Does 'the kingdom now but not yet', the idea, popularised by George Eldon Ladd that the Kingdom was inaugurated by Christ and we can already experience its manifestations, but we must await the Second Coming for its consummation, help us here? I believe it does though it does not resolve all our dilemmas. What this amounts to is a two phase approach: demonstration and achievement. The sobering thought is that as far as justice is concerned, and indeed for any other matter, the first is much easier than the second. As Dr Hughes points out, there have been some significant demonstrations in our day. He was understandably enthusiastic, for example, about the work done by *Jubilee 2000*. What tends to be less impressive is the level of achievement as a result of these demonstrations. Has the debt situation (the main focus of *Jubilee 2000*) improved significantly and is it seen as 'kingdom work' when it has? Similar questions could be asked of the *Make Poverty History* movement and the *Micah Challenge*. Has demonstration led to achievement? More widely, what about the universality of Isaiah 11? Consider the saying in Revelation that 'the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ' (Revelation 11:15). To put it rather simplistically, when can we expect that to happen?

At this point I would like to revert to the familiar categories of post- and pre-millennialism, and I have a suggestion. We might be able to use *either* framework to describe a particular historical situation. Thus, about certain times and/or places one could say that they are in

post-millennialist mode. The Peaceable Kingdom is beginning to be demonstrated and achieved and this to a degree that goes beyond being 'a sign', and no more. Here are some examples, though for all these times and places one could also mention continuing imperfections (injustices) or even new ones introduced:-

- The spread of the Christian faith through the Roman Empire introducing a far more humane attitude in such matters as infanticide, care for widows, renunciation of violence etc.
- The monastic movement with its demonstration of evangelism, community and practical ethics.
- The Reformation and its growth of 'good nationalism' whereby people began to access their faith through their own culture and read the Bible for themselves in their own language.
- The Evangelical Revival with improved standards in public life, the abolition of the slave trade, prison reform etc.
- The Modern Missionary Movement with its emphasis on the gospel for all nations, women's education, better medical care, etc.
- Today it might be the growth of the church in the Global South, although, from a justice point of view the news is not necessarily all that good.

Equally there are times and/or places when the better way to look at the situation is from a (modified) pre-millennialist perspective. One can see that a given civilisation is heading for destruction, or has the seeds of its own destruction in it. Jesus foresaw this doomsday scenario for the people of his day, and, as I understand it, saw 'the coming of the Son of Man' for his generation as the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Similarly, John of Patmos saw the Roman Empire ('Babylon' – see chapter 18 of John's *Apocalypse*) as approaching final collapse.

There are some points I would like to add about this latter perspective – particularly important because I believe we are in one such situation ourselves today. Even in situations of evident decline the Peaceable Kingdom and its justice must always be sought (Matthew 6:33). The withdrawal aspect of the pre-millennialist approach is completely unacceptable. Firstly, because the nature of the Kingdom is always to be potentially an unexpected scene-changer. The mustard seed becomes the big tree – who would have thought it? In Communist China after the revolution the seed of the gospel was buried, but by no means 'dead and buried'. At the end of the colonial period who would have forecast the amazing growth of the church in sub-Saharan Africa? Justice is very quiet (Matthew 12:18-20). The justice that Jesus brought began as something apparently insignificant; indeed at the cross 'his justice was taken away' (Acts 8:33). But that was not the end of the story. Secondly, because success is not really the issue. I wish Dr Hughes had said something about the justice ventures which, despite everything, failed. How do we account for the fact that the Edinburgh Conference of 1910 ('the end of the Conference is the beginning of the conquest' said John Mott) was succeeded

by the First World War? Thirdly, it is perfectly proper to bewail the lack of justice, and to warn people about the consequences of injustice, even in the blackest situation. ('An appalling and horrible thing has happened in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule as the prophets direct; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?' Jeremiah 5:30-1)

We need in all circumstances to demonstrate that justice is our watchword. 'Let justice be done, though the heavens fall', as the Roman maxim has it. Justice is not only for the good times and it is not only for the bad times. It expresses the character of the God whom we serve.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) discussion board.

Introduction

Charity is indeed a noble and beautiful virtue, grateful to man and approved by God. But charity must be built on justice. It cannot supersede justice...to commend charity as a substitute for justice, is indeed something akin in essence to those heresies that taught that the gospel had superseded the law, and that the love of God exempted men from moral obligations (Henry George, 1891). [1]

In our increasingly interconnected and complex world, there is a very real danger that in our desire to show compassion and care for our neighbour, we can unwittingly become part of larger wheels already in motion in a machine which is not Kingdom-oriented in its mandate. Indeed, Henry George articulated well this particular predicament in his response to Pope Leo XIII in 1891, at the height of the European-centred period of globalisation; a time when the industrialised world was rapidly expanding its commercial trade (Steger, 2009, 29-35),

All that charity can do where injustice exists is here and there to mollify somewhat the effects of injustice. It cannot cure them. Nor is even what little it can do, to mollify the effects of injustice, without evil. For what may be called the *superimposed* and, in this sense, secondary virtues work evil where the fundamental or primary virtues are absent. (George, 1891)

The assertion that acts of compassion or charity can 'work evil' where justice is absent is a strong one but one which, I believe, is well-founded both in George's time and ours. Our challenge and, indeed, our remit as Christians is to live missionally (as ambassadors sent out with Good News), and prophetically in ways which may require a deeply critical evaluation of the structures [2] in our world which can be discerned to be (re)producing unjust relationships and outcomes. If we only action what Henry George describes as the 'secondary virtue', we risk falling short of the redemptive and transformative tasks of mission to establish justice.

The connection between compassion and justice is not always easy to maintain. From its inception the Christian faith has understood clearly its mandate of compassion. Second only to the commandment to love God was that to love our neighbour, and as far back as Julian the Apostate's historical record, [3] note has been made of acts of kindness and compassion attributed to Christians. In the New Testament we can discern the compromise of Jewish religious leaders under Roman rule; that is under the structural sovereignty of an Empire [4] organised around different cognitions of justice. Later on, the early Church's relationship to Empire shifted from being somewhat despised, and even persecuted, as a peripheral and technically-illegal sect, to its very public adoption by Emperor Constantine as an official

religion of the Roman Empire. [5] So, from its earliest days Christianity has faced the tensions of living justly, in accordance with the precepts of Judaic covenantal social and environmental justice under Imperial rule, the internal logic of which did not necessarily reflect or concur with Judeo-Christian configurations of justice.

Colonial Gentrification of Indigenous Space

Examples of how the tensions between justice and compassion are played out today have their roots deeply embedded in historical European social structures. These have, often, been exported through colonial processes, which re-configured indigenous peoples' relationships with both their land and their culture. During the Spanish conquest of Bolivia, for example, some colonial towns were founded on ancient indigenous village sites because of their proximity to water and other resources (Klein, 2003). The process of colonial settlement was not one which took into account the traditional understandings of land ownership but which displaced, where necessary, indigenous communities in order to establish government buildings, churches and elite, colonial housing. In addition, the desire to establish colonial-style artisanship and construction was strong, as wealthier migrants, in particular, were keen to establish their superiority in the 'New World'. Indigenous artisanship was considered inferior and inappropriately-crude for this new gentry class, which was at pains to replicate 'Old World' symbols of status. From their founding, colonial settlements were clearly demarcated according to the hierarchical norms of the 'Old World', where elitism and social privilege were expressed in material artefacts (Klein, 2003). Indigenous peoples invariably experienced displacement through this colonial version of gentrification. [6]

This process continues today. The globalising impact of gentrification alongside the attrition of authentic self-sustaining local communities, with the attendant urban drift, is displacing heterogeneous communities. It causes the restructuring of neighbourhoods into very unequal gated elite-zones and ominous 'desert-spaces', where menace is largely attributed to inherent vice rather than to the effects of displacement, want and insecurity. Whilst it is not my intention to explore in detail why modern global economic culture has augured in a new era of gentrification of urban space, I do want to suggest that some of the structural realities which are characteristic of this vision and enactment of society have resulted in particular manifestations of unjust relations.

Consider this example from the Bolivian city of La Paz. From its founding on the site of an ancient Aymara village until today, indigenous [7] communities have been steadily displaced, firstly from the desirable city-centre, then subsequently from the lower-lying regions to the south of the city. Initially this was done by the construction of elite colonial dwellings, then more latterly by modern, Florida-style, gated villa communities. [8] Traditional understanding of indigenous land ownership has usually been disregarded in the process; those who have the money have the power. The result is that the poorer indigenous communities live alongside their wealthier neighbours, but are displaced and marginalised by these urban elites.

As in colonial times, one of the 'social-distancing' markers remains material artefacts. The wealthy urban elites and the emerging middle classes of La Paz have a strong affinity for European and, in particular, American clothing. [9] Trips abroad mean that these purchases can be made, and trade networks soon ensure the installation of costly clothing boutiques on their own doorstep (only 'virtually' so, for the less-wealthy, of course). The importing of all things *americano* 'guarantees' that local, and even regional, clothing-manufacturing is both undervalued and under-patronised with the attendant result that quality is compromised, yet prices remain high. The increasing demand of the urbanised, but less-wealthy, youth culture [10] to wear *americano* brands has created a ready market for cheap, Western-style clothing.

Problematic Charity: Clothes and Toys

It is at this point that some of our well-intentioned acts of compassion can become entangled in the wheels of market forces and social hierarchies. Truckloads of 'charity' used-clothing are sent to Bolivia to be distributed amongst the 'poor' each year. The rich buy their *americano* clothing and the poor get it given to them. There are a number of problems with this model of charity. In the first instance, we continue to give the message that Western-style clothing is both superior and the global norm, or at least, the preference. Secondly, in much the same way as new imported clothing, the flooding of the market with imported donations of used-clothing suppresses local business, along with the associated benefits of local jobs, local investment, and so on. Thirdly, a new market based in foreign imports is established in place of the old indigenous market; that of selling-on donated clothing through the myriad of market stalls and corner shops across cities. Our well-intentioned charity becomes money in the pockets of a shrewd and unregulated informal market. [11]

Upstream in the supply chain, assiduous undercover research over recent years, has brought to our attention the fact that alarming amounts of clothing are being manufactured under conditions akin to slavery, [12] not only in far-flung countries, but right here on our doorstep...in Europe...in the UK. The result being that a pair of branded jeans worn gratefully by a Bolivian school boy (grateful especially for his 'elevated' *americano* status) has, as likely as not, begun its life under the needle of a sewing machine operated by an underpaid or unpaid operator, possibly a child in Bangladesh, India or the Philippines, or even in Leicester, UK. [13]

The markets have spun their ever-increasing webs and cheap, fashionable clothing is in demand. However, 'cheap' and 'fashionable' soon become 'dispensable'. Dispensable clothing trickles more readily into the hands, in the end, of those for whom no clothing is dispensable; the world's poor. Does this render our gifting it to the world's poor 'cheap' also?

Sadly, the internal logic which drives globalised market forces, and which shape those who operate them, can render the effects of our acts of compassion something akin to the proverbial hitting the fan! It is an unfortunate reality which can be extrapolated to a number of other compassionate enterprises. Take, for example, gift-box charities. This Christmas, a range of well-intentioned charity enterprises will truck millions of gifts (one operator cites over

£17.4 million worth for Christmas 2009), originally manufactured in the Philippines or China, [14] again possibly under sweat-shop conditions, (Bloomberg Businessweek, 2006), branded and merchandised in Europe or North America (where the real money exchanges hands) and back to deserving children in countries in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa or Asia (all at great environmental cost). These children know nothing of the impact a Western Christian's act of compassion is having on the stalling of the economies of their own countries, even less, the associated environmental costs which may, in some small way, contribute to the flooding of their relative's homestead in the increasingly-severe weather conditions exacerbated by climate change. Least of all would they understand the resultant, albeit indirect, oiling of local sweat-shop engines, which are the source of the toys the Christian puts in the Christmas box.

In addition to all this, I would suggest, there is another disruptive influence. The children's imagination [15] has been riveted, albeit gratefully, by the importance of being '*worth it*' (where have we heard that refrain before?) to you and to me (their imaginary family). We are so successful, that we can magic up gifts from afar. They may one day 'travel', if only in their imagination, to this far-off place to pay homage and gratitude, ever hopeful of the sustenance and kindness which was, apparently, not to be found in their own kin. Yet, if they dare to travel in their own skin to this 'wonderful' land of bounty where love flows in brightly-wrapped Christmas boxes, they may have a rude awakening...for we may not welcome them, after all!

Do our acts of compassion sometimes carry the inherent danger of displacing the recipient, socially, economically and psychologically? Development work has slowly woken up to this danger, but do we make the right connections and do we allow these connections to instruct our acts of kindness in mission contexts? [16] If we fail to engage critically at this level we will continue to risk displacing local networks of worth and sustenance and deprive local churches of agency in ministering to the needs of their own communities. In addition, we may further contribute, albeit unwittingly, to the maintenance of the *status quo* in unequal and unethical global relationships. Ironically, we may cause other levels of confusion and the refrain from that well-known hymn of thanksgiving, *All good gifts around us are sent from Heaven above...* might take on new meanings in the shadow of the all-consuming transcendence of the 'Global-market Empire'. In what form *will* heaven be conceived by those who receive these acts of compassion – ASDA, perhaps?

Powers which Breach Biblical Community

The truth is, that, for most of us, the toll of living in an exhaustingly complex and interconnected world, where relationships between producers, manufacturers, distributors, retailers and consumers have become so distant as to render them inconsequential in the minds of most of us (in a way not dissimilar, ironically, to our distancing from contemporary monetary value connections, as in the use of *fiat* money). Yet, it is in just these conditions of attenuated connectivity that injustice thrives; where connections between causes and the effects they produce, become more difficult to predict, or even at times, to trace. The internal logic, however, to profit and to reproduce, or expand, at seemingly any cost is self-evident. Systems tend to develop from desires to achieve certain ends.

We can consider the following biblical example where the adoption of a well-exercised logic would systematically lead to the breaching of covenantal justice.

The prophet Elijah, 'the troubler of Israel', had the task of calling Israel to resist and not subordinate to systems of worship associated with Baal - the foreign god of prosperity, introduced by Queen Jezebel. However, arguably his most dangerous task was related to a very material concern; his confrontation of King Ahab's murder of Naboth in order to annexe Naboth's land to his own. Elijah's conclusions that injustice had been inflicted on Naboth were specifically identified in relation to covenantal laws of land ownership rights, which not even a King of Israel had the right to breach. His words to King Ahab, 'have you killed and also taken possession?' [17] (1 Kings 21:19) were spoken from a context of being rooted in shared soil. In this context of proximity, the task for Elijah would appear, relative to today's complexity, a fairly straightforward one.

Nonetheless, Elijah's task was not entirely framed within a local context. The cause for Naboth's death was not solely to be blamed on King Ahab's desire to extend his vegetable patch but on the logic which Queen Jezebel added to his acquisitive desire. Jezebel may have gazed at the same sunset as both Naboth and Elijah, but her vision of justice was quite distinct, birthed out of a different worldview; one where absolute power was vested in the whims of the elite ruler (the King), for whom the end always justified the means. This consequentialist morality is explicitly framed in narcissistic terms; that is, the fulfilment of the desires of the more powerful. The end in this case was land-accumulation for the King, and this end justified the means which resulted in the ultimate displacement-Naboth's death. Salutory.

Like Elijah, we face the task of identifying the usurping powers at loose in our world today, demanding absolute control, and the internal logic of which undermine the Judaeo-Christian understanding of 'just living'. Can we placate or minimise the impact of these powers by acts of compassion, or are these acts of compassion themselves engulfed and sullied by such systems? What mind-sets have affected our thinking and, like King Ahab, left us susceptible to blatant compromises which rupture *shalom* in our communities and result in an ever-growing plethora of negative consequences?

In conclusion, I would like to look at some guiding principles we might consider as we respond to these challenges in practice.

Care in Glocal Mode: Principles for Practice [18]

If we accept, for now at least, that some of the forces at work creating the dilemmas I have described above are beyond our immediate control, we need at least to consider in what ways we might better manage our acts of compassion to take account of the reality of unjust structures. One way in which we can do this, as a Christian community, is to find creative

means of expressing our solidarity with communities in different geographical locations where distance, context and the existence of global market forces all intensify the possibility of acts of charity disenfranchising local community, civil and governmental welfare. We have seen that charity, from outside the country, can actually play a part in stalling the mobilisation of local civil society and government groups which need to work towards establishing their own welfare frameworks. Arguably, some of the energy directed to acts of charity might, therefore, be better deployed in supporting organisations which work in justice-oriented advocacy seeking to establish the material realisation of universal human rights, as enshrined in *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948).

On the assumption that the Christian church will continue to provide tangible compassionate care, I would suggest three principles that might help to minimise negative outcomes of that care. These three principles are based broadly around the notions of encouraging a movement towards local and bio-regional resilience and sustainability, in a similar manner to that articulated by Molly Scott Cato in her book, *Green Economics*. Her chapter 're-localising economic relationships', is introduced with a quote from Lord Beaumont of Whitley, speaking in the House of Lords, and neatly encapsulates the spirit of this alternative vision of a world '...where conviviality replaces consumption, where local identity replaces global trade, and where community spirit replaces brand loyalty' (Lord Beaumont of Whitley in Scott Cato, 2009, 139).

Scott Cato points out that the 'localisation' message is not limited to developed countries, but that, in many respects, it has the possibility of more impact in countries which are less developed, retain more self-subsistence skills and have not yet been subsumed into the wide-scale adoption of capitalist fossil-fuel-dependent models (Scott Cato, 2009, 150). She quotes Robertson who concurs that, 'the principle of more self-reliant local development, and many practical applications of that principle, are equally valid for people in rich and poor countries alike' (Robertson in Scott Cato, 2009, 150).

My first task would be to query whether a particular act of charity is indeed considered relevant or necessary by the local community, or whether it is, in fact, based on the well-meaning, but poorly-contextualised, sympathies of an outsider. Second, we should encourage charity to be expressed, as far as is possible, by local Christian communities using local resources; in other words, to encourage local agency. [19] Third, we should seek to channel any additional external resources through established and authentic links with local expressions of Christian community, with the aim of empowering and sustaining local responses to local needs.

If we consider my first example, that of donating clothing (or it could be teddies or toys!) to projects in countries such as Bolivia or Romania, a more just and effective response may be to look for ways of stimulating and supporting a localised response to need, which takes into account both the local context and the global forces at work. This would probably involve the provision of funding. Although the sending of money instead of clothing carries its own

dangers, if handled in the right way, that money could be invested in purchasing locally-made clothing, or even in commissioning a seamstress or tailor to make the items. Such items would then be distributed to those in need. Some responses may go further and finance the establishment of sewing cooperatives.

It may be a harder task to break the 'spell of desire' for all things *americano* but at least in our acts of compassion we are not complicit in tacitly endorsing that desire, which ultimately has been so destructive to the production of local goods. It should, therefore, be possible to sustain local needs and reinvigorate local identity.

With regards to my second example, we might want to ask ourselves whether exporting a Western-style Christmas is what will really make the right sort of difference to orphans or street-children? Or, could it encourage patterns of desire and expectation which may disenfranchise the child, their local community and their culture in the long-term? A response similar to what I have suggested above might both empower the local church and enable local artisans to produce toys and clothing which would, I suggest, be a better way of gifting both the child, and their communities. Once again, the vision and implementation of such a project would need to be firmly grounded in responsible locally-owned and locally-managed structures.

Christ gave us the command to love one another. He did not always tell us precisely how to do it. We are part of a global Christian family, one where the speed of travel and communications has reduced the distances between us and, in particular, increased the possibility of casual contact (i.e. tourist, short-term, non-immersed). In this context, our models of love, solidarity and care need to be particularly-well thought-out if we desire to encourage the human flourishing associated with living justly in the land, in accordance with biblical frameworks of social and economic justice. I conclude with words from Henry George, once again,

Does it not show the purpose of the Creator...that the advance of man in civilization should be an advance not merely to larger powers but to a greater and greater equality...instead of what we by our ignoring of His intent, are making it: an advance towards a more and more monstrous inequality? (George, 1891)

Bibliography

Batstone, D., (2007) *Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Slave Trade and how we can Fight it*, New York: Harper Collins

Bell, B., (2010) From Charity to Solidarity in Haiti: Lessons for the Policy Makers, *Other Worlds*, <http://www.otherworldsarepossible.org/another-haiti-possible/charity-solidarity-haiti-lessons-policy-makers-part-iii>, [accessed online on 30/11/10]

Bloom, L.M., (2009) U.S. Used Clothing Imports to Bolivia Spur Protests, *The Independent Free Newspaper for Free People*, <http://www.indypendent.org/2009/04/11/bolivia-clothing-protests/>, [accessed online on 30/11/10]

Bloomberg Businessweek (2006) Secrets, Lies and Sweatshops, Bloomberg Businessweek April 26, http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/06_48/b4011001.htm, [accessed online on 30/11/10]

George, H., (1891) *The Condition of Labor: An Open Letter to Pope Leo XIII*, Edited by G. R. Putland, May 15, 2007, <http://grputland.com/classics/hg-col.htm> [accessed online on 30/11/10]

Howe, S., (2002) *Empire: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Ingleby, J., (2010) *Beyond Empire: Postcolonialism & Mission in a Global Context*, Milton Keynes: Author House UK Ltd.

Instituto Nacional de Estadística (National Institute of Statistics) 2007, <http://www.ine.gob.bo/indice/visualizador.aspx?ah=PC20410.HTM>, [accessed online on 30/11/10]

International Bible Society, (1990) *The Holy Bible, New International Version*, London: Hodder & Stoughton

Julian the Apostate (C.E. 332-363) citation accessed on *World Lingo: Translation, Localization Globalization*, http://www.worldlingo.com/ma/enwiki/en/Julian_the_Apostate, [accessed online on 30/11/10]

Klein, H.S., (2003) *A Concise History of Bolivia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Madison, C. A., (1948) *Henry George: Prophet of Human Rights* reprinted online from *Critics and Crusaders*, http://www.cooperativeindividualism.org/madison-charles_on-henry-george.html, [accessed online on 30/11/10]

Grey Postero, N., (2007) *Now we are Citizens: Indigenous Politics in Postmulticultural Bolivia*, California: Stanford University Press

Scott Cato, M., (2009): *Green Economics: An Introduction to Theory, Policy and Practice*, London: Earthscan

Steger, M.B., (2009): *Globalization: A Very Short Introduction*, 2nd Ed., Oxford: Oxford University Press

The United Nations (1948), *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>, [accessed online on 30/11/10]

Wink, W., (1992) *Engaging the Powers*, Minneapolis: Fortress

Notes

[1] Henry George, 'the Prophet of San Francisco', had, as his main concern, the abolition of poverty brought about by unjust social structures rooted in land ownership. His book *Progress and Poverty* was described by Karl Marx as the 'capitalist's last ditch' (Madison, 1947, 257-284).

[2] Whilst we do not want to wrongly contextualise, or even personalise the Jeremiah 1:10 mandate, it does encourage us to think prophetically about what structures in our societies would be judged so corrupt as to be deemed unsalvageable and in need of tearing down. At the very least it may suggest the un-inhabitability of certain structures and, as Christians, should we inhabit that which produces death?

[3] Julian the Apostate, the last Emperor of Rome chronicled in his fierce dislike of the early Christians, 'these impious Galileans not only feed their own poor, but ours also; welcoming them into their agape, they attract them, as children are attracted with cakes. Whilst the pagan priests neglect the poor, the hated Galileans devote themselves to works of charity... See their love-feasts, and their tables spread for the indigent. Such practice is common among them...' (Julian the Apostate)

[4] 'Empire' from the Latin *imperium* meaning rule or sovereignty. For the Romans it also denoted the capacity to wage wars and establish laws (Howe, 2002).

[5] The Roman Emperor Constantine adopted Christianity in C.E. 312. The First Council of Nicaea, in C.E. 325, was a consolidation of Christian orthodoxy endorsed by Emperor Constantine.

[6] 'Gentrification' as used here describes the process of wealthy elites moving into key urban districts which has the impact of gradually displacing poorer residents and disrupting their work patterns. The concept goes back into antiquity, at least to the Roman Republic, where small shop owners were displaced by the elite to build their villas. In a global context local examples of gentrification take on new connections, which can further enhance their position of power in the geographical spaces they inhabit. These powerful alliances, I suggest, have structural reasons for maintaining the *status quo*. Acts of compassion, therefore, are acceptable only insofar as they do not disrupt the relationships within the fabric of dislocation and relocation of persons in this new hierarchy.

[7] 'Indigenous' here is used to denote the pre-colonial inhabitants of the region. Obviously, some in this category would actually classify themselves as *mestizo* or mixed race.

[8] A local park in this popular, 'Americanised', southern zone of the city is called 'Florida Park'.

[9] This riveting of the imagination, which is played out in so many multilayered ways in a globalising culture, means that the products sought after by the global gentry class are infrequently locally produced. In a similar way in which Orientalism created desire in the elites for the exotic 'other' products from far-off lands (which materially and psychologically displaced local British artisanship in

the Age of Empire), so now 'the American Dream' has created desire for Western brands in far-off lands. The irony now is that many of those culturally-encoded products (by this I mean the branding process at the centre of the 'Dream Empire') are produced under the very noses of those who desire it, yet its material and imaginary codification demands a journey to the centre of the 'Dream Empire', before it can be proudly incorporated back, 'branded' into the cultures which desire it, at costs hugely magnified to themselves.

[10] 10-25 year-olds make up over one-third of the population of contemporary Bolivia (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2007).

[11] A recent study by the Bolivian Institute of Foreign Trade (IBCE) confirms that Bolivia lost \$512 million that could have stimulated the internal production market, between 2000-2005, as a result of the import and sale of used clothing. The Federation of Factory Workers reported, additionally, that this activity has resulted in the loss of 56,000 jobs in the textile and clothing industries.

[12] The Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP) 2006, commissioned and published by US Congress, records that 150 countries are implicated as a source, destination or transit country for the slave trade, with some countries being a base for all three activities (Batstone, 2007). This report can be viewed in full at <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2010/index.htm>.

[13] The most recent undercover sweat-shop to be exposed in Leicester was reported on Channel 4's *Dispatches* programme in November 2010, to the shame of a number of retail 'giants'. The article, featured in the *Independent* newspaper, can be found at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/retail-giants-shamed-by-uk-sweatshops-2128022.html>.

[14] Molly Scott Cato cites Vidal's article in the *Guardian* newspaper, which makes the point that what constituted Christmas for many in Britain (2006) was largely 'imported' from China on a 'quarter-mile long, 200ft. high behemoth'; the world's largest container vessel at the time (Vidal in Scott Cato, 2009, 140). In fact, Scott Cato wryly suggests that Christmas would have had to be cancelled if anything had happened to that 'Titan' *en route* to the UK.

[15] By 'imagination' I mean their vision of themselves and their kin in relation to the rest of humanity; how they imagine or perceive themselves.

[16] A recent report by Beverley Bell, founder of the *Other Worlds* movement, focuses on the humanitarian crisis of Haiti. Bell reiterates the problem created by aid which, she says 'strips away national sovereignty, since the already weak Haitian government has been effectively sidelined. Other problems, as discussed in the report, are that it robs people of their dignity and leaves them no 'say-so' in how they get the food they need' (Bell, 2010).

[17] 'Have you killed and taken possession?', has chilling resonances in a world where commodifying market forces have extended beyond the production of goods, natural resources, or even labour, to the bodies and even organs of humans, through global slavery, sex and organ trafficking.

[18] 'Glocal' is a term which takes into account the reality of globalising features which impinge on local landscapes, and it implies a movement towards appropriating those aspects which can be of benefit to local contexts. Of course, there will be differences of opinion depending on what ideologies form the basis of the thinking of those who work to establish Glocal systems.

[19] Local awareness and agency in the meeting of community needs is more likely to both strengthen the local church and its surrounding community, and also be more contextually-appropriate.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) discussion board.

Bodies for Sale: Globalised Trafficking for the Sex Trade

An Interview with Helen Sworn founder of *Chab Dai*, Cambodia



Carol Kingston-Smith, Associate Lecturer in Mission, Redcliffe College (ed.)

When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. (Acts 16:19)

Introduction

Trafficking of women and children, a leading wedge in the broader patterns of human exploitation, is a cause that unites people across steep divides in the political spectrum and religious beliefs...these are ancient abuses, but in our "modern" world, exploitation is happening on a far larger scale as barriers of distance and community restraints crumble. (*Katherine Marshall, 2009*)[1]

Making a viable response to the horrific realities which daily unfold in our market-driven, globalised world today, is one which demands increasing insight and coordination. Helen Sworn is the founder of one such response, *Chab Dai*. *Chab Dai* is an international coalition of partners responding to the problems of human trafficking for the sex trade. The aim of *Chab Dai*, which means "joining hands" in Khmer, is 'to bring an end to trafficking and sexual exploitation through coalition building, community prevention, advocacy and research' (*Chab Dai Website*). (ed.)

CKS: Helen, having left a successful career in business administration and communications, you and Trevor went to Bible College in the UK before heading out to work in Cambodia in 1999, with your two young children. What were the factors/circumstances which led you to engage with work against human trafficking for the sex trade?

HS: When we left the UK for Cambodia, we had planned to work with orphans and street-children as we were unaware of the issue of trafficking at that time. Within a few months of arriving in Cambodia, I was asked by the team to carry out some research in the remote border area of Cambodia and Thailand on the new issue of human trafficking. It was my experience through this horrific first-hand exposure that brought me to the realisation of the issue and that I wanted to dedicate my life to addressing it.

CKS: Looking back, what did you feel prepared you (if anything) for this type of work as a Christian? And what do you recommend to people who are considering engaging with justice-related work such as yours?

HS: Nothing at Bible College prepared me for working in this area! There was little focus on the issues of social justice and I struggled to see where it all fitted together. It was by embarking on a personal journey of studying and learning about these issues, that I was able to begin the process of engaging in the response.

CKS: Given the lack of preparation you felt you had at Bible College for this kind of work, what would you, as an experienced practitioner, like to see colleges such as Redcliffe offering students who are considering work in areas relating to justice issues?

HS: Exposing students to a broader definition of mission through Biblical studies, social justice studies, from both the Christian and secular sectors, looking at Christian social enterprise and also encouraging training in differing professions (such as medical, social work, counselling, strategic planning, research, development, IT, hospitality, administration and finance) to respond in a broader sense to the challenges.

CKS: Your own journey took you to the country of Cambodia. What are the statistics of young people/children in Cambodia who are involved in the trafficking for sex trade and is this a growing trade? If so what do you understand to be the reasons behind its growth?

HS: Offering statistics is often misleading as there has been a plethora of research on the issue which have contradicted one another's methodology and accuracy. What I can offer you is the simple reason behind its growth...DEMAND [2]. All trafficking and exploitation is driven by the demand for the 'product' - in this case the lives of vulnerable women and children. Until we tackle and address the global issues of demand for prostitution and pornography, we will never see an end to human trafficking.

CKS: Obviously, the increasingly-interconnected, networked marketplace facilitated by contemporary globalisation, has hugely facilitated the expansion of human trafficking in our time. Can you briefly describe the chain of events in a typical scenario which lead to a child or woman being trafficked? What are the additional risk factors which make a child more at risk to this form of exploitation?

HS: Obviously the scenarios change from case to case. Often an uneducated family is tricked into allowing their child to go and work in the city or in another country - as a 'waitress' or 'domestic help' or in a factory. The reality is that when they reach their destination, they have no family or community safety nets and are exploited with no way of finding help.

CKS: So prevention and advocacy are obviously key measures and ones which you mention on your website. Can you describe what these initiatives look like on the ground?

HS: Our advocacy initiatives are at both community-level in public education and at Government-level, where we have been selected to work at the highest government working groups to address trafficking and exploitation in Cambodia. This gives us access and influence within the Government to recommend interventions to address the issues. We have three main preventative initiatives focused respectively on rural, urban and Vietnamese communities which are targeted by our staff. The key community gatekeepers in these communities are educated on the issues of sexual abuse and trafficking and how to keep the children in their community safe from threat.

CKS: In your Urban Prevention Program you focus on awareness-raising strategies with community leaders in civic and religious society. How aware are these people, before your intervention, of the severe threats their young people are facing and what kinds of outcome in terms of protective community action have you seen as a result of your prevention program?

HS: As part of our prevention program activities we carry out a pre-test and post-test with the community leaders. Before the training, normally less than 20% of leaders in urban areas are even *aware* of the issues...and the percentage is much lower in the rural areas. Through our case intervention support, we have seen these community leaders voluntarily educate others within their own villages and beyond, who then in turn begin to report abuses and become advocates for change. *Chab Dai* now receives more than 15 case intervention referrals each month directly from the communities who have received our intervention support. These referrals are mostly regarding rape, human trafficking and domestic violence.

CKS: Given that you identify trafficking as being part of the wider criminal industry 'driven by society's demand for cheap products and sexual services' (The Issues: Human Trafficking, *Chab Dai* website), what do you see as being the most significant and effective ways to work in the prevention of trafficking for the sex trade?

HS: Human trafficking is a complex and multilevel social problem. It requires a response at each and every level. We each need to engage within our own spheres of influence to advocate for change wherever we are most effective.

CKS: The USA is identified as being a centre of operations of modern day slavery on the *Chab Dai* website; is this related to the volume of trafficking and the commercial power it has, or for other reasons?

HS: The USA has been identified as being a centre of operations largely because of the sheer volume of perpetrators there who purchase and view pornography and who travel to overseas countries as sex tourists. It is also the nation who hosts the largest number of websites relating to these issues.

CKS: What information do you have on the extent of UK involvement in trafficking and what awareness-raising initiatives can you identify within the UK context for people who are concerned about these issues?

HS: As we know, this is a criminal network and there is much we do not know about those who are driving this abhorrent trade in human lives. The issue of human trafficking in the UK is now in the early stages of recognition, research and intervention. However, most of the general public are still unaware of the issues and see it as a problem for developing countries such as Cambodia.

We want to encourage the general public to get involved. In response to this, we have developed ADVOCACY 4 ACTION packs which can be downloaded from our website (http://www.chabdai.org/download_files/advocacy4action%20UK-CAN.pdf), free of charge. These packs give an overview on human trafficking around the globe, how *Chab Dai* have responded and how the public can respond in tangible ways within their families, communities, churches and within the larger civil society.

Bibliography

Chab Dai Website www.chabdai.org

Claude, K. (2010) *Targeting the Sex Buyer. The Swedish Example: Stopping Prostitution and Trafficking where it all begins*, Sweden: Intellecta Infalog

Marshall, K. (2009) *Need plus Greed: Faith in Action*, Washington Post, 31 August 2009

Recommended Reading (Copied from *Chab Dai's* website resources page – ed.)

Ending Slavery: How We Free Today's Slaves, by Kevin

Bales, University of California Press (2007). ISBN: 0520254708.

Escaping the Devil's Bedroom, by Dawn Herzog Jewell,

Monarch Books (2008). ISBN: 0825461650.

The Johns: Sex for Sale and the Men Who Buy it, by

Victor Malarek (2009). ISBN: 1559708905.

Prostitution, Trafficking & Post Traumatic Stress, by Melissa Farley, Routledge (2004). ISBN: 0789023784.

Prostitution & Trafficking in Nevada: Making the Connections, by Melissa Farley, Prostitution Research & Education (2007). ISBN: 0615162053.

Pornography: Driving the Demand in International Sex Trafficking, by Captive Daughters Media. Xilibris Corp (2007). ISBN: 1425758851.

Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy, by Kevin Bales, University of California Press (1999). ISBN: 0520224639.

Not for Sale: The Return of the Global Sex Trade - and how we can Fight it, by David Batstone. HarperOne (2007). ISBN: 0061206717.

Real Christianity, by William Wilberforce, Revised Edition Regal Books

Notes

[1] Katherine Marshall is Senior Fellow at Georgetown's Berkley Centre for Religion, Peace and World Affairs, a Visiting Professor, and a senior adviser for the World Bank.

[2] Several European countries have recognised the need to legislate against demand which drives the expansion of both national and international sex trafficking. In 1999 Sweden enacted a law which forbids the purchase of sexual services. Similar laws were later enacted in both Norway and Iceland. Norway has extended the reach of its law to include criminalising the purchase of sexual services abroad also (Claude, 2010) [added by ed.].



Profile - Helen Sworn

Helen is Director and Founder of *Chab Dai* Coalition in Cambodia and has been working in the field of counter trafficking and abuse, and on addressing human trafficking for both the sex and labour trade since 1999. Helen is from the UK and her training was in Business Administration and Communication before entering the Corporate Sector where she worked in various management positions for eight

years before attending Bible College where she studied theology, anthropology and basic counselling. Helen has lived in Cambodia with her family (husband Trevor and children Hannah 16, and Joel 12) for twelve years and has worked with various organizations in Cambodia.

When she arrived in Cambodia, she assisted with the development of an aftercare and reintegration program for trafficked children and has also worked among the street-children of Phnom Penh. She then helped to develop an organizational development and capacity building tool; has written proposals and research on trafficking and child labour issues, and has served in organizational development and field project support roles. She is responsible for the overall focus and planning for *Chab Dai*; facilitation and communication between coalition members, external organizations, UN agencies and Government ministries; developing strategy and activities for future years such as advocacy, research and capacity building opportunities; regional and global partnerships and strategies; providing support to those carrying out planned working group activities; and monitoring and evaluating the successes of *Chab Dai* along with her great team.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](#) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](#) discussion board.



Speaking up for Justice Connecting Church and Government

Rachel Davies, Prostitution and Trafficking Policy Officer, CARE [1]

‘The business is not run by stupid people.’

Ardita Kraja’s words have haunted me ever since I first read the article [2] describing her account of trafficking and subsequent sexual exploitation in the UK. Between April and December 2009 over 500 cases were referred to the United Kingdom Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) with 26% of those cases being children. What is particularly concerning is that this figure only indicates how many people have been found and referred within one six month period. It is unknown how many more people are still being exploited – unseen and unheard.

Ardita’s words are a haunting reminder that the criminal gangs who use people like her are strategically clever and very good at what they do.

All of us have been vulnerable in one sense or another at some point in our lives. Traffickers are highly skilled in identifying what a person’s vulnerability is and then using it to exploit them. Often the people they abuse are not in a position to speak up and seek help. The tactics used to silence exploited people are both manipulative and clever.

Although the common perception is that modern slavery is always accompanied by physical chains and locked rooms, it often takes a more subtle form. Threats made to family back home are not uncommon. Sometimes the traffickers will even pay the victim a ‘token’ wage – often very low – to cover up the appearance of blatant exploitation. In many cases exploited migrant workers will not even realise that they have been the victims of a crime.

I once came across a case where a Thai woman was brought to London by a criminal gang. On arrival she was told that she owed £20,000 for the travel arrangements made on her behalf and had to work in prostitution until she paid it off. She did not have a good grasp of the English language and was told that the gang had contacts in the British police force. Although horrified by what she was told to do, she accepted the situation as she did not realise that there was an alternative. Every week her pimp added costs for food, rent and clothing. When the police found her six months later, her ‘debt’ had doubled.

I have also come across cases where girls have been sold to brothels by their ‘boyfriends’, Vietnamese children have been forced to work in cannabis factories by a ‘family friend’ and a person’s home town police officer has turned out to be a trafficking recruiter. The

psychological manipulation used is often so severe that victims will be hesitant to reveal the full extent of their situation even after they have escaped.

Advocacy

‘Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.’
[3]

This verse has a poignant resonance when applied to the situation of those who are crushed and oppressed by people who abuse their own position of power.

When people think of the word ‘advocacy’ it can sometimes drum up images of protesters with placards, chaining themselves to the railings outside Parliament. Although this image may apply in some cases, this is only one outworking of the term. The official definition of an advocate is a person who pleads a case on someone else’s behalf.

Engaging at a grassroots level to help each individual is imperative, but so is engagement to change the structures that allow the exploitation to happen in the first place. At CARE we partner with *Beyond the Streets*, [4] a network of local projects engaging with people in prostitution, as we see this partnership of grassroots work and structural change as vital. If the aim is to communicate on behalf of someone else then it is important that we are – in some way – informed by that person. It is also important to make sure that we are led by what the survivors want to communicate, rather than simply pushing our own agenda which may or may not resonate with the person who we are actually advocating for.

Political engagement

When Wilberforce and his companions began their campaign to abolish slavery in the late 1700s, I wonder if they suspected that it would take over forty years to achieve their goal. Many personal sacrifices were made in the course of those decades and perseverance was key to the eventual success.

This great achievement is most often credited to William Wilberforce, who played a prominent role in the campaign. However, what we need to draw on for today’s climate is the recognition that abolition was not brought about by one man alone.

The end of the legal slave trade was achieved by a movement of people who refused to adhere to the *status quo*. Every person who refused to take sugar in their tea, or signed a petition, or badgered their Member of Parliament, or who was brave enough to air their views over dinner, contributed to the eventual change in legislation.

It can be easy to think that our own voice does not matter and cannot possibly make any difference. However, together our individual tones become a movement which changes the culture around us and has the power to influence strategic change at a high level.

Three years ago we encouraged projects and supporters to write to the members of a parliamentary committee who were debating an amendment to tackle the demand for sex trafficking and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Several of the letters moved the MPs so much that they read them aloud during the debate.

Although the law did not change on that occasion, as a result, the ministers announced that they would take six months to run a consultation on prostitution legislation. Out of this process came a Bill which proposed to tackle the demand for sex trafficking and forced prostitution by making it an offence to pay for sex with a person who is 'subject to force'.

There was great objection to this proposed law and over the following year we worked with survivors, NGOs, MPs, local projects, and concerned individuals across the UK to encourage MPs and Peers to vote in favour. Right up until the evening of the key vote in the Lords in November 2009 we expected the clause to be dropped. Miraculously, the law was passed and was finally enforced in April 2010. This would not have happened if a movement of people from all walks of life had not come together and made their voices heard.

The challenge ahead

Although some significant steps have been taken, the route to tackling trafficking and exploitation is not a simple one. It is a complex issue which requires a multi-faceted approach. There are many factors which need to be addressed – both through legislation and via other means – in order to fully tackle this problem.

Every year children are brought into the UK and exploited through forced begging, domestic servitude and prostitution. What is especially shocking is that recent research has shown that out of one group of 80 identified child victims of trafficking in the UK, 64% had gone missing from social services and have never been found. It is paramount that the Government makes sure that this trend does not continue. Clearly, more needs to be done to protect vulnerable children who have been trafficked into this country.

This is just one of the issues addressed in the proposed European Directive on Human Trafficking. The UK is one of only two EU member states which have not opted-in to the agreement. It is very clear that UK legislation and practice does not rise to all the challenges set out in the Directive and if we do not embrace it we will be failing some of the most vulnerable people in our society. [5]

There is a real need for people in the UK to speak up and encourage the Government to look again at their decision to opt-out. Many men, women and children are unseen and unheard. Those of us who have a voice can help change that.

Notes

[1] <http://www.care.org.uk> .

[2] <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/oct/23/trafficking-prostitution-women-myth>.

[3] Proverbs 31:8. See also the following verse.

[4] <http://www.beyondthestreets.org.uk>.

[5] See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/aug/30/coalition-opts-out-sex-trafficking> for commentary on the Coalition's refusal to sign up to the Directive.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) discussion board.

Do Justice, Love Mercy and Walk Humbly



An interview with Sheryl Haw; International Director, Micah Network

Andy Kingston-Smith, Lecturer in Mission, Redcliffe College (ed.)

AKS: Sheryl, what is your role within Micah Network, and what are some of the key purposes and objectives of Micah's ministry?

SH: As of April 2010, I have been appointed as the International Director of Micah Network.

The underlining verse from the Bible that has guided Micah Network is from Micah 6:8: 'What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with your God.' The inspiration and overriding focus we draw from this encompasses all aspects of our lives; the being, doing and saying of living out the Gospel; in short, this is called integral mission.

Our mission statement captures the essence of our network objectives; to *motivate* and *equip* a global community of Christians to *embrace* and *practice* integral mission. Another descriptive term that helps us to understand integral mission is holistic transformation. The objectives of Micah Network encompass all these aspects;

- **Do Justice:** To stand and speak out for justice and mercy through our commitment to hold all levels and aspects of decision-makers and people in power and/or with authority to account for their responsibilities
- **Love Mercy:**
 - i. Relief: life-saving responses
 - ii. Reconciliation: of us to God, to one another, to creation and to oneself
 - iii. Restoration: of all things under Christ
 - iv. Good governance
 - v. Good practice in meeting real community needs
 - vi. Social transformation: equality and justice
- **Walk humbly:** New Kingdom values that Jesus has declared

It is essential that we understand what integral mission is. The Micah Network Declaration of Integral Mission drafted in 2001 [1] unpacks the process in its entirety. As a network we bring like-minded organisations together to fellowship, share experiences and expertise, to enhance capacity and practice, to stand together in solidarity for the issues we believe need to be advocated for and on behalf of, and to forward the centrality of mission.

AKS: Given that your framework is an integral one, there must be areas which have prominence because of the urgency of the times we are in. What would you consider to be the 3 most critical justice-related issues in mission today, and why?

SH: I would advocate, in general terms, a proper, Biblical response in these three key areas:-

- Firstly, **Socio-political and economic justice**

This is necessary so to make ensure, weaker and more vulnerable people are protected and do not become victims of oppression. All should have access to sufficient essential goods and services to sustain life. Arguably, a large share of the responsibility for ensuring that this happens lies with the government [2] and this is one of the reasons Micah Network and World Evangelical Alliance have partnered to create a campaign called Micah Challenge, which has as its primary focus to hold governments to account for the promises captured in the Millennium Development Goals [3] and, in particular, to halve global poverty by 2015. [4]

- Secondly, **Restorative justice**

Wherever there is an abuse or a misuse of power, and advantage is taken over by another, the character and Word of God are clear – God calls us to practise justice and correct inequity. [5] Because God loves justice, He requires it to be done for all and this includes correcting imbalances of power.

- Thirdly, **Spiritual justice**

This requires the proclamation and demonstration of Good News, which heralds the freedom Christ has won for us all. [6]

In each of the 3 areas of justice mentioned above, I believe we are called to stand, speak out and actively pursue justice. It is a travesty for us to see injustice, but do nothing about it. Some practical ways in which to engage and pursue justice are:-

- Confronting injustice in society through exposing it, raising awareness of it and standing together to address it (e.g. through campaigning)
- Delivering the poor from exploitation – this requires a practical intervention, as well as addressing the structures and institutions, which propagate injustice.
- Liberating the powerless from oppression - (e.g. helping to break the cycles of violence and counter-violence, which threaten the vulnerable).
- Creating 'just communities', which are intentionally-committed to include outcasts and the marginalised.

AKS: What would you recommend to people who are considering engaging with justice-related ministry?

SH: Principally, two key things:-

- Firstly, **Preparation**

Being involved in relief and development activities amongst communities which were marginalised and oppressed showed me that the provision of basic needs acted only as a temporary relief of physical needs, and did not address the causes of poverty and injustice that reduced them to the state they were. This required aid. Holistic transformation requires one to address the total need, and to seek good changes and restoration.

- Secondly, **Engagement**

I believe a number of things need to be considered:-

- We should be aware that our own background, upbringing and education have all influenced our perspectives and our responses. We need to humbly research and seek understanding before God and those we seek to serve, and this includes recognition of the equality that God's Kingdom brings in.
- To walk alongside those we seek to serve, so as to understand and share the burden. This may entail becoming involved in working with those who are oppressed and marginalised.
- A combined effort, using contextually-appropriate means and drawing from local efforts and resources wherever possible, is vital. This is one of the reasons why Micah Network seeks to mobilise and network with grass-root organisations and the local church, as the key agents for transformation.
- We must keep informed, and share with likeminded people. Standing in solidarity, by engaging in campaigns, has a powerful voice. [7]

AKS: In terms of training and preparation for ministry in areas where justice issues are prominent, what would you, as an experienced practitioner, like to see training institutions, such as Redcliffe College, offer students, who are considering this kind of work?

SH: In Micah Network, we approach justice and advocacy through three integrated perspectives, and I would advise exploration of the same for Redcliffe students;

- **Theological perspective:**

To engage with God's view of justice expressed throughout the Bible. Students should consider the questions that act as barriers for Christians to engage in justice

ministries, and to grapple with the questions that would enhance such engagement. This supports a form of apologetics.

- **Good practice:**

To consider the various approaches for engaging in justice and advocacy ministries, comparing secular and faith-based approaches, exploring best practice and Christian distinctiveness.

- **Learning:**

Effective utilisation of case studies, and critical learning of the various types of justice work, at all levels of society.

AKS: Does engagement in development lead to justice issues coming to the fore, and how should local communities be empowered to engage critically with issues of injustice in their own contexts?

SH: Engagement is relief, and development inevitably leads to justice. Integral mission indicates, clearly, that one's response needs to take into consideration *all* aspects that impact a community.

At the heart of mobilising a community to respond to its own needs is the local congregation/church. The church brings a message of hope and good news about identity and equality. The local church can demonstrate the love of God in action by working with the community to help address its needs. Creating the platforms for communities to learn, be informed and to discuss what they believe is the best way to proceed, is what is referred to as 'participatory empowerment processes'.

AKS: In what way are we, in the West, guilty of obstructing local community empowerment by virtue of our propensity to keep control, manage and restrict the flow of funds, and take the leadership roles in policy-making?

SH: The danger we have when working with communities is our tendency to want to force our own agendas, drive the pace of change and impose our own morality. This may often be culturally-defined and legalistic, resulting in acting in a judgemental and exclusive manner. We are susceptible to bringing our own cultural version of Christianity and we tend to seek conformity. We often, unintentionally, create dependencies by using funds and resources as a means to an end. It is often easier to give money than to struggle alongside!

Genuine love and acceptance of one another is essential to guide our practice.

Notes

[1] See <http://www.micahnetwork.org/en/integral-mission/micah-declaration>, for details of the Declaration.

[2] Note Jeremiah 21:12.

[3] See chart, below, which sets out the Millennium Development Goals:-



[4] See www.micahchallenge.org.

[5] See, for example, Psalm 9:9, 18 and Psalm 103:6.

[6] Freedom from slavery, as in Luke 4:18-19.

[7] Such as the Micah Challenge – website address is set out in note 4 above.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) discussion board.

Act now! Inspiring Churches to act on Climate Justice



Ben Niblett, Head of Campaigns, Tearfund

Introduction

If you close your eyes and say the words 'climate change,' what image comes to mind? There are a few common responses – wind turbines revolving in the sun, dry-cracked earth in a farmer's fields, recycling bins, smoking factory chimneys. But the most likely, by a long way, is a polar bear on Arctic ice; an iconic image of the Environment under threat from polluting humans. It is a striking image, but sadly it does not seem striking enough to make us want to do much about it!

I have led Tearfund's campaigns team since 2005, and during that time I have been talking to church audiences around the UK as to why we need to take action on climate. There is much interest, but so far climate is nowhere near the top of the Christian community's agenda, Redcliffe College excepted. In this article I would like to explore why *not*, how we can wake the church up to this part of our discipleship, and why it should matter to us.

Stop Saying 'Environment'

Climate change is an environmental issue. Species are being threatened with extinction, patterns of wildlife are being changed, glaciers are retreating and the Arctic sea ice is melting as a result of climate change.

Nonetheless, I think there is a problem with the word 'Environment.' The majority of people, most of the time, see the Environment as of secondary importance, and as something slow-moving. It is not that people do not care about it, but we care about other things more. And it is not that people, or even churches, cannot respond quickly; we just do not expect the Environment to need a quick response, since it is always there. We are not used to it giving us 'deadlines' for acting, in the way it now is.

Christians have extra reasons to take the Environment more seriously, since we know that God created it, saw that it was good, and entrusted us with its care. But we also have an additional array of tasks and activities, be they our individual devotions, our church activities, our evangelism and service to our communities, all of which may crowd out time to consider the Environment, even if we believe God wants us to.

It is my experience that awareness of the environmental aspects of Christianity is relatively low. It is not an area where many Christians have had much teaching on, or spent long

thinking about. Numerous songs and hymns mention nature and, allegedly, bird-watching is the most popular clerical hobby (!), but that does not seem to be enough.

I am most definitely not denying God's love for his creation, His command to us to be good stewards of it, or our ability to see God in it; I am not saying it is pointless to provide the church with good teaching about the links between Christianity and the Environment. However, I have realised, sadly, that talking about the Environment does not motivate us to act very much, and that conscientising the church in environmental teaching will take longer than we actually have. For most people, we need to communicate these important issues in other ways.

Our Neighbours Need Us

Tearfund started working on climate change issues back in 2002. We started hearing about the impact it was having on the people we serve, 'It rains a lot when it used to be dry, and it's dry when it used to rain,' says a 44-year old rice farmer from Nepal named Ram, whom I heard from recently. I have heard similar concerns from farmers in Africa, Asia and Latin America saying that the weather is not like it used to be, and it is harder to make a living. Rains are less reliable, floods and droughts are worse (and more frequent), often occurring in the same place. Rising sea levels mean that in coastal areas, salt is infiltrating the water table and faster erosion is pushing people inland. Tearfund does a lot of disaster relief work, and that has led us into a significant focus on reducing the risks from disasters, for it is much better to help communities prepare to cope with, and better-handle disasters, than to arrive after disaster has struck and 'pick up the pieces'. Climate change has led to more, and worse, disasters occurring in many of the poorest parts of the world, with the recent devastating floods in Pakistan, being a good example of this. We cannot ever say, for sure, that a particular flood or drought (or other weather event) was specifically attributable to climate change, because it might have happened in any case. However, we can be sure that it makes events like these much more common.

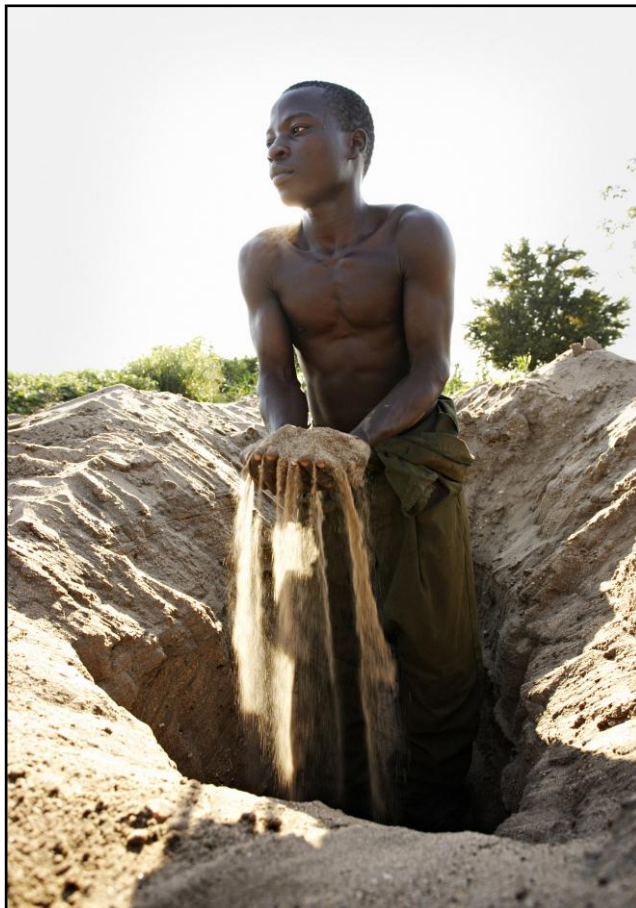
Talking with church audiences about such phenomena often takes them by surprise (albeit less so now, than when I first started). This may be since climate change is still often seen as being about the 'Environment', without it being linked to the plight of people (who are increasingly being affected by environmental changes), and who depend on the Environment. It is a developmental issue too, so we need to see past that polar bear!

Seeing climate change issues as a threat to all the good work to overcome global poverty that churches and others in the Christian community have been engaged in for the last few decades, works well in conveying the urgency of the matter. I am biased, of course, since the majority of Tearfund's supporters are, by definition, motivated by compassion for our neighbours living in poverty around the world (and the UK). But I do also talk to people who are not supporters, and it is a message that resonates with them, too. I am grateful that the church does feel compassion; that is how it should be.

Nor is it just about churches. Tearfund was the first international development agency to join the Stop Climate Chaos coalition (see picture opposite), [1] which most of the others have now joined too. The point of it was to build a broader group of people who cared about international development as well as the Environment. It may still be a minority, but it is a big one, and growing still!

It's not Fair!

Christians are motivated by compassion, the urge to help someone who needs it, and by justice; the desire to correct an evil. So are plenty of other people, for that matter. The great injustice of climate change is that the people who are currently bearing the brunt of it are the ones who did least to cause it, and gained least from



the industrial wealth that caused it. A Briton's average emissions are around 9 tonnes *per annum* of carbon dioxide equivalent, a Malawian's are just 0.1 tonnes *per annum*, [2] nearly one hundred times *less*, but it is Malawians who might go hungry if the changing climate results in a poor harvest or too little grazing to support livestock (see picture opposite).

God is a God of justice. I do not doubt that the unfairness of climate change makes Him very angry, and should make us very angry too, not with an anger that demonises politicians or business chief executives (though having avoided demonising them, they do need to hear from us!), or that paralyses us with guilt at the output level of our own emissions, but a righteous anger that gives us the speed and stamina to act, in response.

I am excited when the church takes our place in the forefront of bringing justice. I get excited doing it literally, standing at the front of a march alongside our friends from other parts of society; a peaceful march, naturally (see picture below from the G20 march). I am excited doing it incarnationally, when an MP knows that they cannot visit so much as a church parent-and-toddler group without being asked what they are doing to make the world fairer. I am doing it internationally, when Christians, with hugely different backgrounds and across time zones, speak with one voice. I am excited when we show this part of God's character to people who had not seen it before.



I am excited by the way speaking out together can unite us. I was excited by the joint church service in Westminster Central Hall, before 'The Wave' climate change rally last year. It is the only time I have ever had to turn people away from a church service, because there was no room for them. There was a special moment when the

Archbishop of Canterbury, the Archbishop of Westminster, and the Director of the Evangelical Alliance stood together at the front of the stage, just above the drum kit, and as the first song began, the three of them suddenly realised how loud it was going to be, and winced in ecumenical unison!

Now!

Telling people that climate change is hurting people now is also essential. It is not something that might happen to our grandchildren if we fail to take all reasonable precautions in years to come, it is happening right now, and that pushes it higher up the agenda.

So too does the other piece of urgent news that we have failed to get across to most churches and the public in general; there is very little time left to make serious cuts in our greenhouse gas emissions. The cuts needed are big enough to mean critical changes to the way we think, live, and run our economy. Global emissions need to stop increasing, and start decreasing, by 2020 at the very latest; otherwise it is going to be hard to prevent very damaging temperature rises, as opposed to merely *fairly* damaging ones, that we are already too late to prevent. In fact, 2016 would be considerably better than 2020!

Views in the Pews

We conducted a survey of people who described themselves as regular church-goers and questioned them on what formed their views regarding climate change. Overwhelmingly, they were the same as everyone else; listening principally to friends, family and colleagues, as well as to the media. Conversations about climate change with other members of their churches were mostly informal although some had studied these issues in small groups. Very few had heard sermons or any 'from the front' teaching about it.

One of the biggest influences on what Christians think on this topic is the *Daily Mail*, the best-selling middle-market newspaper, selling 2.1 million copies a day, which is often sceptical about climate change. The *Daily Telegraph*, the best-selling quality newspaper, at 659,000 copies, is moderately sceptical. [3] Christians do not, necessarily, consume media uncritically and believe every word written, but newspapers such as these are, of course, influential.

In the UK, political leaders have wisely accepted that climate change is a real issue and needs tackling. David Cameron has promised that the current coalition-government will be the greenest ever. There is certainly room for disagreement between 'left' and 'right' concerning the most effective action to take in responding to climate change, however, the science and the changes being experienced both by the Environment and humans is not just a political issue. Sadly, this is not how the issues are viewed in the US or Australia, where accepting the reality of climate change has become a politically-dividing line. I can entirely understand that 'right-wingers' dislike the thought of new taxes and greater state controls to slow down climate change, but, surely, the answer is finding effective free-market responses, and hopefully, some 'Big Society' ones, rather than simply denying the existence of the problem? Margaret Thatcher was a famous early adopter of government action on climate, wisely bolstering the UK's flood defences back in the 80s.

Trust us...we are Scientists!

There is a substantial minority of people who want to understand the science of climate better, but for most people the science is not the place to start. Instead, it is the biblical injunction to feed hungry people, and news of poor communities' experiences of increasing hunger together with the science, form tools to understand that experience better and identify an appropriate response.

We do need to communicate the science clearly. There is overwhelming scientific consensus that the climate is changing significantly. Average temperatures are increasing much faster than would happen naturally, and this is due to human activity. There are, also, many aspects of climate science that are less-well understood. For example, the Gulf Stream is likely to continue to keep the UK's climate mild, but we are less certain. However, the evidence is sufficiently compelling and we are sure enough of the overall picture to know it is time to act. The Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a vast scientific undertaking that provides the authoritative view on the science. As Sir John Houghton puts it, 'no previous scientific assessments on this or any other subject have involved so many

scientists so widely distributed both as regards their countries and their disciplines.' They say they are more than 90% sure about climate change. If I was more than 90% sure I was going in the wrong way, I would turn round!

There has also been considerable misinformation about the science. Much of it has been spread deliberately by industry lobbyists, in a similar way to how tobacco companies worked so hard to spread doubt regarding the scientific consensus that smoking caused cancer.

I have learnt to adopt a critical approach towards each new myth that is put about, but it is worth reiterating that there is very little disagreement among scientists. Only a handful of scientists across all relevant disciplines dispute that climate change is real and is caused by human activity. Much of the scientific evidence is from recent records such as tree rings; believing in a young earth does not mean you can simply put the science to one side.

For most of the public, scientists are authority figures and generally trusted, despite the overall loss of trust in 'authority'. However there is a fairly small minority of UK Christians (although a much larger number of ones in the US), who instinctively mistrust scientists because they see them as deniers that God created the world. Again, we can cut through this mistrust by emphasising the experience of poor communities on the ground that genuinely do have worse harvests than they used to. It is also helpful to point out how many scientists are also committed Christians, with groups such as 'Christians in Science' [4] and 'the John Ray Initiative', [5] being good examples, not to mention the good work that 'A Rocha', does too. Tearfund's scientific advisor is Sir John Houghton, a Christian who writes about his faith, as well as being a distinguished retired Chief Executive of the Meteorological Office and Chair of the Scientific Assessment Working Group of the IPCC.

In this context it is encouraging to note that whilst Christians can be mistaken they remain compassionate. In the last 18 months I have regularly met a minority of Christians who say they do not believe climate change is human-induced, and thus have no intention of cutting their emissions, unless it also saves money. However, they do accept that many of the communities Tearfund serves are finding that their climates are changing and it is increasingly difficult for local people in such places to make a living, so they are willing to contribute their prayers and their money to help them combat these changes. This experience is not generally matched by my contemporaries in secular organisations.

What about the Weather?

Climate change is a huge global problem, but nonetheless people's personal experience of the weather does affect how seriously they take climate change on a global scale. Unusually warm spells make people inclined to think about it, colder spells, conversely, make us feel it is less of an issue. It is helpful to point out 2010's extreme weather events around the world, such as Pakistan's floods (see picture opposite), Russia's summer heat-wave, and the drought and subsequent floods in the Sahel in West Africa. We cannot be sure these

particular events were caused by climate change, but we can be sure that climate change makes droughts, floods and heat-waves, exactly like these, more likely. [6]



Hope is Stronger than Guilt

The worst mistake to make about climate change is making people feel hopeless. It is easy to fear that this is a daunting problem that is out of control and might mean, for example, that we have to stop flying for holidays. Guilt can be paralysing, as can a more rational sense of helplessness, that, as one of over 7 billion people presently in the world, we cannot do anything about it. If I am the only one taking action, I am wasting my time unless I start to persuade others to join me. If I am the only one praying about it, that is still powerful!

The Church at the Summit

When the US and China debate climate change, they are not thinking like two conference negotiators talking formally across a table, but rather like one sprinter shouting to a competitor over their shoulder as they strain every muscle in a race. The US is afraid its economy is being overtaken by China's, and as they are now the two most powerful nations in the climate talks, such competition sets the tone and does not make agreement easy to reach.

Tearfund has been attending the UN climate summits (at Copenhagen and, very recently, at Cancun) with partners such as the United Mission to Nepal, to get the voices of the world's poorest people heard there and to advise and lobby the UK government, and the governments of our partners, such as in Nepal, Malawi and Brazil. We can bring evidence from the grassroots' experience, and expertise from the top, so as to promulgate effective policies. When it is well-prayed for, it is a powerful combination!

Local Church on the Ground

There is much that can be done on the ground to help poor communities adapt to climate change. Average temperatures around the world have already risen by 0.7 degrees Centigrade since the Industrial Revolution, and another 0.7 degrees or so of warming is on its way from the greenhouse gases that have already been emitted into the atmosphere. [7] Accordingly, there is great need to tackle the symptoms of climate change; confronting the cause is essential but not enough. It is my experience that the majority of people in the UK have not thought about this very much, although, equally, it is my experience that church audiences, who are used to thinking about development issues, do get it quickly once it has been explained to them.

Tearfund mostly works through local churches, which sometimes is the only organisation of any kind in remote places, and I hear encouraging stories of churches showing farmers in such communities how to grow different crops that resist drought better, how to adopt new techniques to conserve water, how to help women organise together to build water tanks to keep the rainwater that lands on the roofs of their homes, and how to help communities organise local early-warning systems in the event of floods. Ram, the Nepali farmer I mentioned above, told us of his training (by the United Mission to Nepal) to build stone river embankments to prevent flooding. And it is not just in rural areas; churches are also helping urban slum-communities prepare for more and worse flooding. There is also much that churches can do to influence local and national government plans and decisions (often at Synod level or with the directors of national Evangelical Alliances), to make sure poorer people are not forgotten.

Campaigning Works

Campaigning can change things, and over the last 15 or so years I have seen churches leading in this. We can be inspired by Wilberforce's campaign against the slave trade 200 years ago, the US civil rights movement of 50 years ago, the 'Jubilee 2000' debt campaign of ten years ago, and 'Make Poverty History' [8] of five years ago. In relation to the 'Jubilee 2000' campaign, raising our voices together got \$88 billion of debt cancellation for countries that could invest the money more critically for basic internal needs, than reimburse the World Bank or the IMF. [9] Uganda has abolished primary school fees and trained more teachers, so thousands of children now get some education. These children would not have had access to such education previously, especially girls. In Mozambique hundreds of thousands of children were immunised, some of whom would have died of easily-preventable diseases. It would take Tearfund roughly 1,000 years to raise \$88 billion, so campaigning is excellent value for money!

This makes climate campaigning one of the most effective things we can do about climate change. David Cameron promised that this would be 'the greenest Government ever' and it is important for us to encourage the Government to keep its promise. Cutting UK emissions is vital, as we are the world's tenth biggest emitter. Pushing hard for a global deal that stops average temperatures rising by more than 1.5 degrees, and that transfers \$200 billion a year from rich to poor countries to help them adapt to the consequences of climate change they were, mainly, not responsible for, is even more important. Governments do more when they are held accountable, and MPs support is galvanised when they see evidence that their voters are demanding such action.

Conclusion - the Church in the Lead

I believe there is a great opportunity for the church to give the lead in society which it ought to. We are able to demonstrate this by obeying God's commandments to love our neighbours, provide food for people who are hungry, and care for creation. We can share a message that is not about fear of change, but about freedom and hope; freedom from

consumerism, and hope that God can bring people to work together. When the public witnesses that, they are more likely to ask us; why is it that Christians live differently?

Resources

- Tearfund Campaigning Resources (www.tearfund.org/campaigns)
- For a helpful guide to the issues relating to climate change, see www.tearfund.org/climate
- Act Fast quarterly postcard, Global Action quarterly magazine and Global Action emails
(<https://www.tearfund.org/Campaigning/Globalaction/default.htm?NRMODE=Published&NRNODEGUID={DEA131A4-B741-41A4-B6FB-C985BF730737}&NRORIGINALURL=/Campaigning/Globalaction/&NRCACHEHINT=Guest>)
- SuperBadger app. on Facebook and iPhone
- Tearfund Lifestyle and Biblical Resources (www.tearfund.org/climate)
 - *For tomorrow too* booklet or pdf
(<http://www.tearfund.org/Campaigning/Climate+change+and+disasters/Free+booklet+For+tomorrow+too.htm>)
 - Carbon Fast 2011 - Lent actions for individuals on email or a leaflet, plus church resources online (<http://www.tearfund.org/Campaigning/Carbon+Fast.htm>)
 - Climate bible studies, Climate stories
 - Q&A to persuade people in your church
- Tearfund In-depth Resources. Policy reports and practitioner resources - Tearfund International Learning Zone (<http://tilz.tearfund.org/>)

Organisations

- www.climatejusticefund.org - from the Church of England
- www.stopclimatechaos.org - Stop Climate Chaos campaigning coalition
- www.robinhoodtax.org - Campaign coalition seeking new sources of money for climate adaptation, and other good causes (Great little video clips!)
- www.arocha.org - Christian environmentalists

Books

- *Climate Change*, Sir John Houghton - authoritative
- *How Bad are Bananas?*, Tim Berners-Lee - quirky guide to relative carbon footprints
- *Six Degrees*, Mark Lynas - science journalist who writes well

- *Planetwise*, Dave Bookless
- *Cherishing the Earth, Christianity and the Environment*, Margot and Martin Hodson

Films

- *An Inconvenient Truth*
- *Age of Stupid*
- *11th Hour*
- *Hope for Planet Earth* – CD resource from Tearfund, A Rocha, Christians in Science and Share Jesus International, www.sharejesusinternational.com

Notes

[1] See <http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/>.

[2] UK and Malawi's carbon footprints per head: Norwegian University of Science and Technology 2009 study, quoted at <http://www.clickgreen.org.uk/analysis/general-analysis/12268-us-tops-global-carbon-footprint-league-table-%E2%80%93-uk-comes-10th.html>.

[3] UK newspaper circulations from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/abcs>.

[4] See <http://www.cis.org.uk/> for more information.

[5] See <http://www.jri.org.uk/> for more information.

[6] See the brief article from the BBC's website indicating that 2010 has been one of the hottest, if not the hottest, year(s) on record, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-11841368>.

[7] Levels of warming since the Industrial Revolution cited in, Meinshausen et al, Greenhouse-gas emissions targets for limiting global warming to 2 degrees C, *Nature*, April 2009.

[8] <http://www.makepovertyhistory.org/takeaction/>.

[9] Levels and impact of debt cancellation from www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/. Refer to Q&A pdf in the 'does debt relief work?' section.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case

please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](#) discussion board.

Is *Fairtrade* the Same as *Just Trade*? A *Direct Trade* Perspective

Ian Meredith, Head Bean, Ethical Addictions [1]



'Sometimes I want to ask God why He allows poverty, suffering and injustice when He could do something about it. But I don't because I'm afraid He would ask me the same question' [2]

What do my life story, my decisions and my actions say about what I have done to reduce poverty, to ease suffering, or to stop injustice? I am deeply challenged by this, and so I am working towards a humble answer.

This short article cannot look at all the relevant and necessary issues of trade justice. However, what it can do is identify a few things I have learned through my work sourcing and importing coffee direct from farms.

Trade has been an integral part of our lives for thousands of years, on a local and global scale, and that is not going to change. What has changed, through globalisation, however, is our awareness of, and closeness to, those trading relationships. Who we trade with, what we trade, and most importantly, how we trade, have become increasingly important issues for many of us as Christians. This however, is not a new issue for God. If you read through the Old Testament prophets, or the words of Jesus, you'll quickly realise that issues of trade justice are not only part of how we should think and act as followers of Jesus, but they should be integral to our values and behaviour.

Part of our attitude and action as Christ's ambassadors on earth has to be to stand against unjust people and structures, which are so often the root cause of poverty. Surely this is Good News to the poor and part of God's mission?

So for me, part of living out that mission is done through my work sourcing and supplying coffee with *Ethical Addictions*.

Tanzania, 2009: Whilst visiting a farm on Mt. Kilimanjaro we were invited to the small village of Manoshi to meet some coffee growers who had benefited from our (and others) investment in smallholder coffee production. Providing a pulper (picture opposite – ed.) allows them to better process their crop, however they still had no route to market and so were inevitably being exploited by the local cooperative, receiving only a fraction of what their coffee was worth (about \$1/Kg).



The Manoshi village grows exceptional coffee – high altitude, volcanic soil, glacial water – a wonderful, full-bodied, rich cup of coffee; but cheap, because of injustice. They deserved a better price; they deserved a fair price. If we had offered them \$1.50 or even \$2.00/Kg we would have bought the coffee, and they would have been thrilled. But whilst that may be seen as good, and even feel good, such an act of mercy or charity would remain unjust. This is a high grade Arabica coffee, worth a certain price on the market and justice is nothing short of that price.



[3]

[4]



After some discussions on logistics, and various misunderstandings through interpreters, much singing broke out amongst the women of the village, as we agreed to buy their coffee for what would be a net price equivalent to a significant market premium, more than tripling their income. For the 2011 crop we have just confirmed our commitment to a sustainable relationship buying their entire crop again at an even higher price reflecting changes in the worldwide market. This is just trade. And the result is joy overflowing into song, thanksgiving and worship...by simply doing what is right.

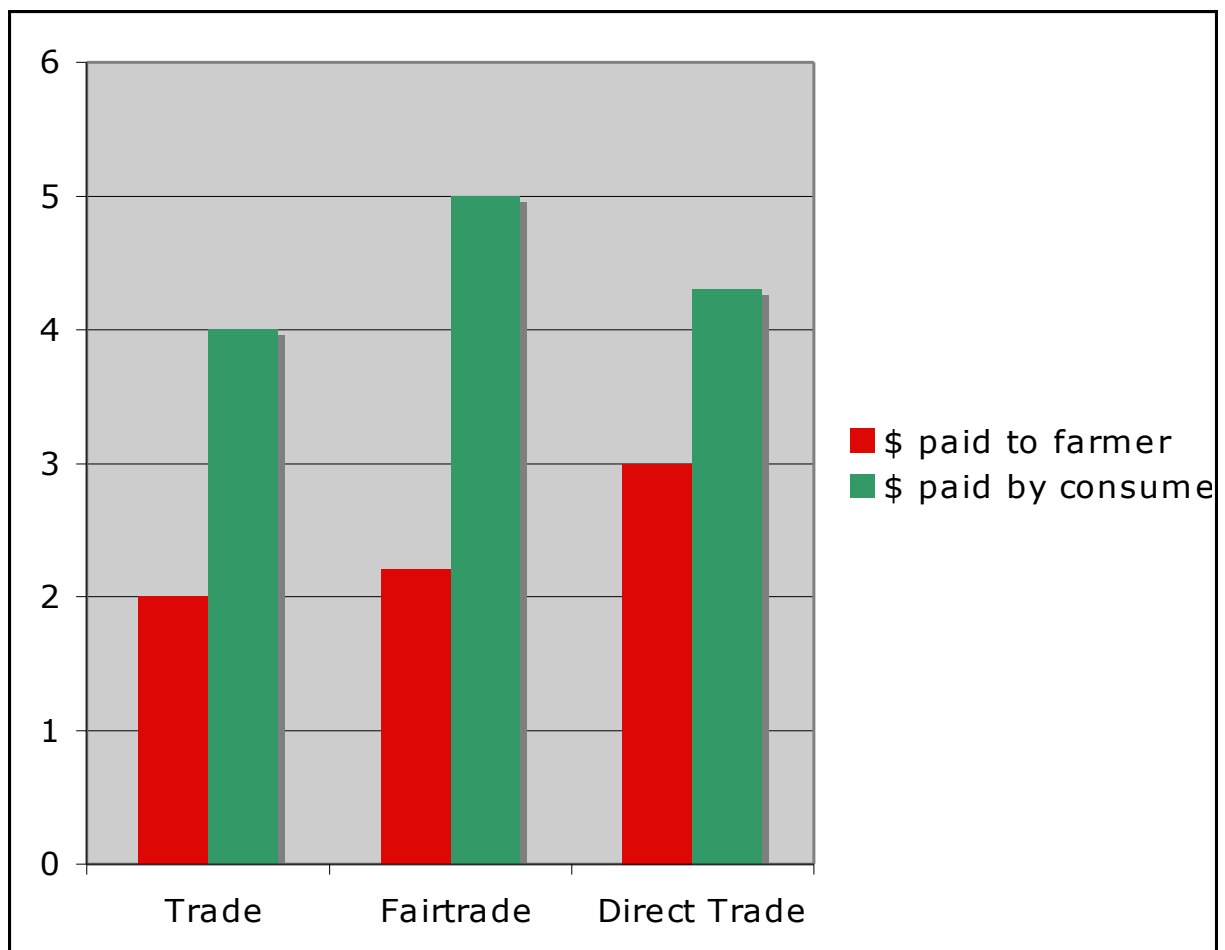
So what can we learn from this example? Trade and justice are far more complex issues than this short article can address, and there is no one solution. These are some of the justice issues throughout the supply chain that we need to be more aware of and consider in our ethics when trading, be it as a company like *Ethical Addictions*, or an organisation or church choosing trading partners, or as consumers in a supermarket.

It is too easy for us to turn a blind eye. It is also too easy to simply trust a company's branding, wording, and labelling. Take the story above – would it surprise you to discover that the cooperative previously trading with and exploiting the Manoshi village is actually the same cooperative that *Fairtrade* work with and certify coffee from? Whilst the cooperative may get a 'fair' price, the actual farmer can easily be neglected in the monitoring process, given the lack of scrutiny and true transparency.

Whilst I acknowledge some of the great work of the *Fairtrade* Foundation over the years, and I acknowledge it is impractical for us to investigate every product we buy, I want to highlight how easily we can believe we are acting justly, when in truth we may be supporting injustice.

We live in a world where ethics is now big business – how can we trust the branding? Are we as fully informed and as aware as we could be in order to act justly in our trade? Do we too easily trust labels in order to offset our guilt without investigating other options?

For example, the simplified graph below shows the impact of three different trading relationships on the price a coffee farmer receives and the price we then pay on the shop shelf (Both prices are issues of justice – paying a fair price for a certain standard of product at whichever end of the chain you are).



These are comparative, not absolute figures, to demonstrate a point. Through organisations like *Fairtrade*, a premium is sometimes paid to the farmer. However, *Fairtrade* only

'guarantee a better price' is paid to the farmer. Commendable as this is, in a discussion about justice we do need to ask; is a better price a fair or a just price?

A further complication is the exploitation of the market and the trade chain that then takes advantage of the certification process, all adding an additional premium along the way and pushing the end price disproportionately upward. So for good-hearted consumers willing to pay a premium, they are disappointed to discover that only a tiny percentage of their extra payment actually reaches the farmer.

Direct trade on the other hand cuts out a number of the intermediary players in the chain and returns a larger proportion of the final price to the original producer. Furthermore, there are fewer margins in the chain to be exploited and so the product is brought to the market at a more competitive (and fairer) price to the consumer.

A significant *caveat* exists for direct trade companies – they have to be trusted to act justly and honestly. The direct trade relationship is *not* there to benefit the trader in getting a discounted price, but to ensure the farmer more directly benefits from the trade. Direct trade through companies like *Ethical Addictions* shows clear and significant benefits. However, the same concerns exist as in other trading options and we should not be complacent, or transfer our trust easily. Issues of transparency and justice remain and the onus of responsibility remains with each of us as individuals to hold companies to account and ask the difficult questions.

This position has recently been backed up by some significant research by *The Institute of Economic Affairs* (Mohan, 2010) [5] that demonstrates:-

- Fair Trade is not a long-term development strategy and the model is not appropriate for all producers.
- Fair Trade promoters have never demonstrated how much of the additional price actually reaches producers. Even analysts sympathetic to the movement have suggested that only 25% of the premium reaches producers.
- Fair Trade does not benefit the poorest producers due to heavy administration requirements and fees involved in becoming a certified producer.
- Fair Trade's demand of exclusivity from schools etc. can damage other social labelling initiatives such as the Rainforest Alliance. Other such labelling initiatives often provide environmental and social benefits in a more direct way.

My story, at *Ethical Addictions* is one of trying to live out some of my values of justice, but it is by no means complete. I realise a lot of what I have said may be surprising, or controversial, and where I have been inconclusive or scarce in my comments due to the brevity of the article, please forgive me, but understand my motive has been to stir conversation, questions and responsibility. I am still learning, thinking, reading, wrestling, discussing and participating in these issues of justice and I invite you to join me to discuss them and ponder your response.

Equally, please do not read this as a triumph. At *Ethical Addictions* we are not perfect and are working on those areas where we know we can do more. We are all on a journey together to live out God's call to justice. For me part of that is lived out through trade justice in my field of work. But there is a lot more I could be doing, big and small.

There is no such thing as being neutral or impartial on the issue of justice. That option is not available to any of us; certainly not those of us who profess to follow Jesus. There have been times in the past when awareness, or access, or ability, may have genuinely prohibited our acts for justice. These are not justifiable excuses today. There is no neutral position; to ignore issues of injustice today is to side with the perpetrators of injustice.

So I ask myself, and I ask you, why do we allow poverty, suffering and injustice when we can do something about it?

Bibliography

Mohan, S., (2010) *Fair Trade without the Froth: A Dispassionate Economic Analysis of 'Fair Trade'*, London: Institute of Economic Affairs <http://www.iea.org> [accessed online on 4.11.2010]

Stearns, R., (2010) *The Hole in Our Gospel*, Nashville: Thomas Nelson

Tucker, R., (2006) *Fair Trade: A Christian Ethical Perspective*, <http://www.rethinkingmission.org.uk> [accessed online on 15.11.2010]

Woodman, C., (2011) *Unfair Trade: The Truth behind Big Business, Politics and Fair Trade*, London: Random House Business

Notes

[1] Ethical Addiction's website is <http://www.eacoffee.co.uk>. The Author describes himself as a dad, a husband, a struggling disciple of Jesus, a friend, a student, and a coffee drinker. He is currently studying the MA in Global Leadership in Intercultural Contexts at Redcliffe College (ed.).

[2] Anonymous quotation.

[3] Photo of the Author buying coffee at Manoshi village.

[4] Photo of shade-grown coffee near Manoshi village.

[5] You can read a brief but comprehensive summary along with the complete article at

<http://www.iea.org.uk/record.jsp?type=release&ID=217>.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) discussion board.

A Case Study of Relational Justice and Patterns of Familial Violence - Muhabura District, Uganda



The Rt. Rev. Cranmer Mugisha, Bishop of the Diocese of Muhabura, Uganda

Introduction

I have always been amazed by the way the terms, 'Justice' and 'Democracy' have been used by the privileged few to gain power, fame and accumulated-wealth around themselves at the expense of the suffering, unprivileged ones.

In many cases, most of us have usually understood justice as exercising authority in the maintenance of 'right'. But the easiest way to define it, so even the most common person understands, would be that justice is 'fairness'. Both these definitions are found in the English dictionary. Therefore, there is no way justice can be separated from the concept and practice of development and it makes sense to the ones who would be most needy of it.

Taking the case of Muhabura, [1] we have come to believe that justice without economic empowerment will never be exercised to the level whereby the undeveloped will demand justice. This may be so because their view of livelihood will depend on the mercy of the developed few.

In our fight for justice, we have found that economic empowerment, as it relates to gender violence, is a big concern in Kisoro district and in Muhabura Diocese, in particular. It is generally agreed that democracy and good governance is a cornerstone for sustainable growth, stability, peaceful co-existence and development; elements that 'fund' justice.

Poverty and familial violence

Due to high levels of economic challenge, there are, equally, high levels of poverty in families and associated violence related to gender has remained a serious issue that needs to be addressed.

In Muhabura Diocese, we have seen many tragic cases, where:-

- Children have fought their parents to death in order to inherit property
- Men who believing that working is the responsibility of the wife (women who are supposed to dig the land, feed their children and their husbands), have been violent towards their wives and beat them up. Some have even killed them, because their wives have not handed over money (the wives have worked for) to them for their drinking binges

- Children have dropped out of school because of the influence of parents who want the girls to get married or help them in the fields. This increase in dropping out of school is accompanied by an increase, at the same time, of prostitution in both urban and rural areas. This has led to amplified levels of poverty in families
- Men who work and then spend all their money in bars, and when they reach home and demand food, have caused trouble, which has led to violence resulting in serious injuries and even death
- In December 2009, a young man of 17 years of age, from Kateretere parish, hit his mother in the head (she was admitted to Kisoro Hospital), for not allowing him to marry in her own house. This was because the young man had failed to build his own house
- Couples, who were officially married in church, have engaged in serious violence. This led to separation of some couples and of some men marrying other wives

It is unfortunate, as these cases were not outside the church. As a result of such issues, development is stunted, violence increases and there is no justice in many of our families.

The above mentioned problems are key indicators of the fact that injustice is a serious problem, but the culprits are incapacitated by their dependency on others and they cannot even speak out, for fear that they may lose out on the benefits.

Strategies for Rebuilding the Community with Kingdom values

As a Diocese, it is our responsibility to educate both the privileged and the unprivileged about gender issues in families, communities and churches. This will help to reduce poverty levels, increase incomes and bring peace and stability. It is the duty of every human being to be an advocate for justice and development. It is in the light of the above problems that we have put in place measures and strategies in our community. These can be implemented in a number of ways:-

- There is a need to go 'back to basics', and teach people the primary duties and roles of men and women, young and old, in order to bring about harmony in Society. Sharing of responsibilities is very important in families
- There is need to find out the causes of violence in families and look for practical solutions that are suitable to all people
- There is need for people to know how to resolve conflicts, in case they arise
- There is need to respect one another and encourage an atmosphere of dialogue
- The Diocese needs to emphasise biblical approaches to problem-solving and encourage the Bible to be used as a reference tool to bring about justice in families

- There is need to empower people economically, through general participation in economic activities that will lead people to economic emancipation
- There is need to create educational programmes for the youth in the Diocese, and train them in their roles of stimulating development and ushering in justice
- Men also need to know they have an obligation to encourage their wives and in their activities

We are doing this in conjunction with local organisations and Western organisations, both faith and non-faith based. We will continue to invite people to participate with us.

Conclusion

It is my understanding that God has created us for a purpose. He also provides resources so that our purpose may be fulfilled. It is part of the role of the church to ensure economic and sustainable growth, peace and stability, order and justice; for that is the reason why He came, and the reason why we are created; to live fullness of life for His glory (John 10:10).

All injustice is brought on by the selfishness and greed of a few individuals who want to own the whole world. However, they find that their lives are full of emptiness and they feel insecure. In treating others unjustly they are 'exalted' by creating fear amongst the masses. As Christians we base, and must continue, to base ourselves on Jesus' principles of preaching the Good News to people, but also of feeding them so that they do not go away hungry. Together we can empower the powerless, that they be liberated to see the love of Christ in practice, and not only in words.

Notes

[1] Muhabura Diocese is one of 33 Dioceses of the Anglican Province of the Church of Uganda. It was inaugurated on 14th January 1990. Muhabura Diocese covers the entire Kisoro District in the extreme corner of Western Uganda. Muhabura Diocese is about 540 kilometres from Kampala, the capital city of Uganda. It is densely populated with about 350 people per square kilometre. Muhabura Diocese borders the Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire) to the west, Rwanda to the south and Kabale and Kanungu districts in the East and North, respectively. See <http://dioceseofmuhabura.org/> for more information on Muhabura Diocese.

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) discussion board.

In His Image: Understanding and Embracing the Poor

A Book Review



Tim Davy, Lecturer in Biblical Studies and Mission & Director of the Centre for the Study of Bible and Mission, Redcliffe College

In His Image is a popular level book written by the International Director of Oasis. Drawing particularly, though not exclusively on his extensive experience in India, Andy Matheson challenges the reader with the importance, complexity and possibilities of standing alongside the poor as a way of participating in the mission of God.

His particular angle, as the title suggests, is to view the issue of poverty (in its many guises) through the lens of all people being made in the image of God. This gives the book a welcome coherence which sets his discussion helpfully within a robust framework.

Following two introductory chapters on the meaning of the image of God and an analysis of the various dimensions of poverty, Matheson then works through a series of relatively short chapters that unpack and illustrate his discussion:

Community; Wholeness; Change; Empowerment; Compassion; Justice; Prayer; Receiving; Celebration; Prevention; and Perspective.

I appreciated the use of the image of God as a starting point, not least because it puts Genesis 1-2 more on the agenda than has often been the case. While he does not compromise on the reality of humanity's rebellion and sin, Matheson is keen for the reader not to rush past the opening chapters of the Bible, 'after all, Genesis 1 came before Genesis 3. People are made in the image of God before sin comes into the world. In fact, the fall in Genesis 3 is so horrendous because our creation in God's image in Genesis 1 is so wonderful.' (p3)

I found the book's anecdotal material profoundly challenging, not just because of the heartbreaking stories of broken lives and desperate poverty, but also because of the way Matheson combines honesty about his own failings with a resilient hope that God is at work in the midst of seemingly overwhelming need.

Although his focus is his own experience in India he also draws helpfully on stories from elsewhere, most notably from the work of Oasis in the London area.

A number of key, up-to-date issues are dealt with well, including the difference between development and transformation, the relationship between the local/personal and the global,

the need for prevention rather than just dealing with the aftermath of abuse (e.g., with people trafficking), and the importance of genuine partnership.

The book is clearly not intended to be an exhaustive treatment of the subject of poverty, but it certainly makes a significant contribution to the discussion. More than merely discussing these matters, *In His Image* spurs the reader towards more informed action. A very good and readable book, on an ever-pressing issue.

In His Image: Understanding and Embracing the Poor

ISBN - 9781850788706

Andy Matheson

Authentic Media

[<back to top>](#)

Please Note: The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of Redcliffe College.

If you would like to respond to this article, please use the 'Voice your comments' form on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) website (www.redcliffe.org/encounters). You may prefer to email your response to mission@redcliffe.org, in which case please remember to include your full name, your organisation/role and whether you would like your comments posted on the [Encounters](http://www.redcliffe.org/encounters) discussion board.