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The Third Wave And The Third World: C. Peter Wagner, John Wimber, and the Pedagogy of Global Renewal in the Late Twentieth Century¹

24 November 2014

ABSTRACT: While there has been a great deal of social science literature on the explosion of Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity in the Global South, and also on Conservative and anti-Modern forms of resurgent Christianity in the United States, there has been little work asking about the causal effects of the former on the latter. Drawing from existing literature, interviews, and archives, this paper contributes to filling that gap by arguing that in the mid-twentieth century, Evangelical missionary concerns about competition from Global Pentecostalism led to an intellectual crisis at the Fuller School of World Missions; this crisis in turn influenced important Third Wave figures such as John Wimber and C. Peter Wagner, and is linked to key moments and developments in their thought and pedagogy.

KEYWORDS: C. Peter Wagner, Fuller School of World Missions, Global Pentecostalism, John Wimber, Pedagogy

This essay argues that a crisis in Evangelical Missiology resulted from the rapid growth of Pentecostalism Worldwide, and that this crisis had important effects on the thought and pedagogy of several important American Charismatic figures, including John Wimber (a leading figure in

¹ In addition to the print and archive sources listed below, this material is drawn from confidential interviews with people associated both The Vineyard and with the Fuller School of World Missions/School of Intercultural Studies; I thank them for their generosity. I also wish to thank the librarians and archivists at the Regent University Library for all the assistance that was rendered to me when I was researching in the John Wimber Collection.

the Vineyard Christian Fellowship) and C. Peter Wagner (a noted Charismatic educator and author). Furthermore, this article also argues that through Wagner and Wimber, this crisis resulted in an “instrumentalization” of Charismata in the early Vineyard, and a shift from a quantitative imaginary to a qualitative imaginary in segments of the American Church Growth movement. Part of the stakes in this argument arise from the influence of these two figures; however, part of the possible relevance of this argument comes from the fact that it is relatively rare for academics to consider the influence of global Christianity on the Charismatic renewal movements of the 1980s and 1990s.

This is unfortunate. When thinking of world-historical shifts that have occurred in the last one hundred years, without doubt one of the most important has been the shifts that have occurred in the global distribution, numbers, forms and intensities of Christianity in the 20th and 21st centuries; this has (at least in part) taken the form of the exponential growth of the Pentecostal and Charismatic variants of Christianity in Africa, Latin America, and Oceania. This has been both a demographic and an intellectual shift in the locus of Christianity from Euro-America to a space that is often referred to as the “Global South,” and which, in a previous dispensation, was called the “Third World.”²

When these forms of Christianity are discussed, it is usual to contrast their growth and intellectual influence with the demographic loss and secularisation that has occurred in the previous Christian centres of concentration in Western Europe and Anglophone North America³. Secularisation - however understood - has not been a uniform process, however. There is sociological evidence to the effect that while some

² See generally Joel Robbins, “The Globalization Of Pentecostal And Charismatic Christianity,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 33(2004): 117–43; Philip Jenkins, *The next Christendom: the coming of global Christianity*, Oxford (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002).

³ These generalisations are particularly the case in my discipline of anthropology; for reasons of competency and comity, anthropology will be the primary (though not the exclusive) focus of my discussion of the literature.

religious forms have been waning, until quite recently more (for lack of a better word) “conservative” forms of Christianity have fared better, and had even tended to grow (though this may have recently topped out in America). I am careful about the term conservative here, because I want to be clear that these resurgent forms of American religiosity that we are discussing are not conservative in the Burkean sense of the word. In the United States, for instance, these avowedly anti-modern forms of Christianity have been quite innovative, both at the level of technology, practice, aesthetics and theology. And these innovations have been at times quite important.⁴

A good example of this innovation is “Third Wave,” an American charismatic revival movement that started in the late 20th century. The term third wave is used to suggest that this form of Pentecostal-infused Evangelical Christianity, consisting of post-denominational charismatically affiliated churches, is a successor to the two “previous” “waves of the Spirit”: Pentecostalism in the early 20th century, and the mid-century Charismatic movements that occurred in the various established denominations. This term “third wave” is a little out-dated, and a little dangerous as well, as it denies coeval status to these other Christian forms, portraying them as living fossils; and it is not clear whether terms of more recent coinage, such as the “New Apostolic Reformation,” or “Apostolic Networks” are any better.

⁴ On theologically conservative American Protestantism as ideologically anti-modern, while still adopting ‘modern’ technologies and organizational templates, see Lawrence, Bruce. *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age*. University of South Carolina Press. Columbia, South Carolina. 1995; Susan Friend Harding. *The book of Jerry Falwell: fundamentalist language and politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000). This literature primarily addresses forms of Fundamentalism and Conservative Evangelism; by way of contrast, R.G. Robin has argued that certain strains of early Pentecostalism could be characterized as displaying a folk-modernity; that characterization seems to be in part based on the utilitarian use of modernist modes of organization, however. R. G. Robins. *A.J. Tomlinson: Plainfolk Modernist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

For the sake of clarity, let's turn to a specific exemplar: the Vineyard. The Vineyard is a Southern California originated, but now international church planting movement. When the Vineyard discusses its "distinctives," it focuses on it being "culturally current," that is eschewing what it sees as "religious" forms, preferring speech, presentation, and worship that are more in harmony with contemporary cultural and aesthetic norms. A good example is Vineyard praise music, which borrows heavily from various popular music genres. More telling of innovation, the Vineyard also presents itself as "empowered evangelicals," or as part of the "radical middle."⁵ Both of these rather gnomic terms are used to indicate that the Vineyard understands itself to be a mix of on one hand, Evangelical theology, and on the other hand, of Pentecostal supernatural practices, such as speaking in tongues, healing, and prophecy. This may seem to be an unstable compound, and the fractious history of the Vineyard suggests that it is, but for many Vineyard believers, particularly long-term veterans and leadership, this haunting instability is a feature and not a bug, something that makes their religious practice seem exciting, and perhaps a little dangerous.

Both this sense of danger, and the idea of the Vineyard as a hybrid object, is an inheritance from John Wimber. Wimber was (at different times) both the founding director of the Department of Church Growth at the Fuller Institute of Evangelicalism and Church Growth, and a session player for the Righteous Brothers. He led the Vineyard from 1982 until his death in 1997; it was during this period that the Vineyard experienced its greatest growth, and was also the time when its reputation as a charismatic-renewal movement was cemented.

And the Vineyard has had respectable growth; it has expanded from thirteen churches when Wimber started stewarding the movement, to its

⁵ Rich Nathan and Ken Wilson, *Empowered evangelicals: bringing together the best of the evangelical and charismatic worlds* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Vine Books, 1995); Bill Jackson, *The quest for the radical middle: a history of the Vineyard* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Pub., 1999).

present state of 1500 churches globally, with about 590 churches in the United States and more than one hundred churches in the UK.⁶ More than its growth, though, the Vineyard has been lauded for its influence; it had been described as being responsible for the ‘Californianization’ of American Evangelicalism, as being part of a ‘second reformation,’ resulting in a new, experientially centred Protestantism, and as one of the ‘way-stations on [the] transnational rails’ that are responsible for the global propagation of neo-Charismatic and Pentecostal Christianity.⁷

This last descriptor is interesting, because it brings up a common omission in the literature. By and large there has been little written about the temporal co-occurrence of what we might call “global Pentecostalism” on one hand, and of anti-modern forms of American Protestant and post-protestant Christianity on the other. When it is addressed, at least in the field of anthropology, it is usually as the effect of ideational material and financial support from “Western” and often “American” forms of Christianity to “Global” Pentecostal-Charismatic Christianity;⁸ when the effect of global P-C Christianity on Christianity in the West and in North America is taken up, it is usually either as part of diasporic movements or expatriate churches opening in the West (for instance, the vast literature on Ghanaian and Nigerian churches in Europe and the United Kingdom).

This lack of attention in anthropology to the effects of “Global” Christianity on the West is particularly pronounced. During the last decade, there has been a growing interest in ‘global’ Christianity, as well as Christianity in the

⁶ Thomas Higgins, “Kenn Gulliksen, John Wimber, and the Founding of the Vineyard Movement,” *Pneuma* 34 (2012): 208-228

⁷ Mark Shibley, *Resurgent Evangelicalism in the United States: mapping cultural change since 1970* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1996); Donald Miller *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the new millennium* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); David Martin, *Pentecostalism: the world their parish* (Oxford; Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 2002).

⁸ See, e.g., Steve Brouwer, Paul Gifford, and Susan D. Rose, *Exporting the American gospel: global Christian fundamentalism* (New York: Routledge, 1996).

Euro-American West.⁹ That shift, though, has occurred for what is understood to be two distinct and autonomous reasons; ‘global’ Christianity has become of interest to anthropology because of its growth, while resurgent anti-modern ‘western’ Christianity is seen as a worthy object because of its perceived political vitality.¹⁰

There are reasons to be suspicious of this account of one-sided Western influence: it is clear that in previous moments of comparable religious foment there was a much greater level of transnational integration. Historians of early Pentecostalism, and indeed early Pentecostals themselves, were well aware of the international networks traced out by late nineteenth and early twentieth century revivals; as opposed to the usual Topeka, Kansas to Azusa Street, Los Angeles folk narrative common among contemporary Pentecostals believers in the United States, early 20th century Pentecostal intellectuals such as Frank Bartleman often posited different alternate ‘peregrinations’ of the movement, favouring itineraries that had the spirit first transversing Wales and India instead of Topeka before alighting on Los Angeles and Azusa Street.¹¹

Here, I’ll present a similar international genealogy for the Vineyard, albeit one with more phase changes, and one where it goes through a rather narrow institutional bottleneck. Now the Vineyard tends to frame its history as a domestic revival; what is being claimed here is that both the form and the growth of the Vineyard were catalysed by a crisis in American Evangelical Missiology that is directly traceable to the growth of Christianity in the Global South. This crisis gave rise to an attempt by American

⁹ See Jon Bialecki, Naomi Haynes, and Joel Robbins “The Anthropology of Christianity.” *Religion Compass* 2(2008): 1139-1158.

¹⁰ For a rare exception in anthropology, see Kevin Lewis O’Neill, *City of God: Christian citizenship in postwar Guatemala* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), which discusses the mutually beneficial interactions between Pentecostal megachurch pastors in both the developed and developing world.

¹¹ Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street* (Plainfield, N.J. : Logos International, 1980).

Evangelicals to capture what they would categorize as Pentecostal supernatural powers, and to use these capacities for what they understood as Godly, but yet technocratic ends: as another instrument in the set of tools that was programmatically offered by the self-styled social science of American Church Growth. This, I will argue, in the end not only give rise to the Vineyard, but mutated segments of the Church Growth movement so much that it became something else entirely.

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When scholars write on the Vineyard, it is as a domestic affair, a revival that fell from the sky in a hermetically sealed Protestant America. There are three pieces of scholarship that take the question up. Now, these accounts have been beneficial in documenting this quickly growing movement. However, to differing degrees, these accounts only focus on the Vineyard as at once responding to, catalysing, or causing transformations within white Evangelical culture within the United States; to the extent that the forces bringing the Vineyard into being is imbricated with any larger socio-historical phenomenon, it is at most seen as intertwined with changes in the broader Anglophone culture.

Tanya Luhrmann's *When God Talks Back* is chiefly an ethnographic account of the modes of self-discipline that allows for Vineyard believers to have a sense of God as both a sensory presence and as a perceived interlocutor.¹² In her account, though, she takes up history as well, tracing this underlying desire for immediacy back to the Jesus People movement of the 1960s; this, Timothy Jenkins has recently stated, "on its own is a valuable contribution to the study of Protestant Christianity."¹³

¹² T.M. Luhrmann, *When God talks back: understanding the American evangelical relationship with God* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012).

¹³ Jenkins, Timothy. "Religious experience" and the contribution of theology in Tanya Luhrmann's *When God talks back*. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 3 (2014): 369–73

Similarly, Donald Miller's *Reinventing American Protestantism*, also depicts the Vineyard as basically a sequella of the 1960s "Jesus People movement," and as an iteration of a larger "Post-Modern" American Protestantism.¹⁴ What sets the Vineyard apart in Miller's account was the way that it was transformed by Wimber's expertise as a Fuller "Church Growth Consultant" as well as his interest in more charismatic Christianity and divine healing. For Miller, the Vineyard is a new turn resulting from a post-nineteen sixties rejection of hierarchical religion; while at the same time it is identifiable as another repetition of the cycle of denominational growth and decay that (following Fink and Starke) Miller sees as central to the religious history of North America.¹⁵ To the degree that an outside of the United States exists at all for Miller in *Reinventing American Protestantism*, it is either as a missions field for these movements, or as parallel examples of theologically conservative, experientially centred religiosity occurring in other geographical domains, not as a causal agent.

Bill Jackson's whig-history of the Vineyard, *The Quest for The Radical Middle*, is centred on the particularities of the Vineyard and, unlike Luhrmann and Miller, does not attempt to paint the movement as another token of a larger abstract type.¹⁶ This leaves it more nuanced, even if it does use a larger Western Christian history, and particularly an Anglo-American Christian history, as the ground against which the figure of the Vineyard is made visible. His account, though, is centred almost exclusively on John Wimber; so much so that it reads as much as a biography of Wimber as it does a church history.

¹⁴ Miller *American Protestantism*; also see his account of the post-Wimber period in Daniel Miller "Routinizing Charisma: The Vineyard Christian Fellowship in the Post-Wimber Era," in *Church, identity, and change: theology and denominational structures in unsettled times* ed. David A Roozen; James R Nieman (Grand Rapids, Mich. : W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2005).

¹⁵ Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The churching of America, 1776-1990: winners and losers in our religious economy* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

¹⁶ Jackson, *Quest*.

However, what I am suggesting here is that while Wimber certainly was pivotal, he was only a proximate cause. To understand the Vineyard, we have not only leave the United States, but also turn to another outsized figure, though again nothing can be attributed to this person alone, either.

This outside figure is C. Peter Wagner. Wagner's career trajectory will place him in the centre of some of the more contentious moments of American Pentecostal and Charismatic Christianity during the 20th and 21st centuries; he could be viewed as either wandering *Zelig*-like into these moments, or alternately as midwifing them. More importantly, it was he who coined the two most common terms used for Vineyard-like movements: while "radical middle" and empowered Evangelicals are Vineyard-originated term, Wagner is the author of the phrase "Third Wave of the Spirit" and, a decade and a half later, of the term "New Apostolic Revival" as well.

There is a tendency among some current Vineyard members to view C. Peter Wagner as having slight tendency towards being a raconteur and a self-promoter. But there is reason to suspect that his accounts of his days as an Evangelical missionary to Bolivia may be different. Now, there is a certain American Charismatic speech-genre that is structured by early failure turning into later unforeseeable yet exemplary success; it is a way of marking the kind of transformative journey that is so central to Charismatic sensibilities. But in Wagner's account of his early mission days, there is something so raw and almost abject about the way he discusses his initial failings, and also by the exacting nature of the quantitative figures that he invokes to communicate the degree to which success eluded him, that give these claims a plausibility, rather than reducing them to a mere element in a genre form.

Consider the details. By nineteen sixty-five, Wagner was an important figure in Bolivian Evangelical missions. He was an experienced missionary, who except for a year's furlough spent getting a Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary, had been working in Bolivia since nineteen fifty-six. When he returned to the mission field after that one year sabbatical, his *bona fides*, along with an earlier masters from Fuller Seminary, eased his way into heading the Bolivian Theological Educational Association, as well as being the General Director of the Bolivian Indian Mission; the same qualifications also made him the ideal Bolivian partner for a series of national pastor's conferences funded by the Los Angeles' based World Vision International.

This World Vision money was a particular boon, as it allowed the organisations that Wagner served to carry out a rather ambitious national project. This money was folded into an already existing Bolivia-wide program being conducted by the "Evangelicalism in Depth Institute," an organisation that promoted intra-Evangelical cooperate projects. Nineteen sixty-five, EID had determined, would be a year for congregations to make a push for conversions like had not occurred before in the preceding seventy years of Evangelical activity in Bolivia. The rough idea was, in one coordinated and exhausting effort, to collectively spend Evangelical Bolivian resources entirely towards the conversion of the nation. Remembering the year, Wagner described the tone among his fellow Bolivian evangelicals as such: "Never has there been more excitement; never had there been more unity; never had there been more public pronouncement of the gospel."¹⁷ This exhaustive coordination sometime worked to the exclusion of all else: "Some Christian Bible school even closed for the year so the students and faculty could be active in EID. The hope? Reach Bolivia for Christ!"¹⁸

¹⁷ C. Peter Wagner, *Wrestling with alligators, prophets, and theologians: lessons from a lifetime in the church: a memoir* (Ventura, Calif.: Regal, 2010), 64.

¹⁸ Wagner, *Wrestling*, 66

The scope of this aspiration is striking. The gap between that aspiration and its achievement, though, is significant. Consider these numbers. In 1964, the year before Wagner's push, Brazilian Evangelical Protestantism grew 15%. The next year, during the Wagner-led concerted effort, there was a considerable change . . . which took the form of a three per cent *drop* in growth. This was not a permanent drop; during 1966 it rose back up to 14%, only to drop back down again to 11% the following year.¹⁹ Wagner's own project did not "reach Bolivia for Christ," but rather caused its hand to falter for a season. Damning as these statistics are, Wagner cannot complain about them; these numbers were Wagner's own.

Wagner compiled these figures as part of a post-mortem that he put together in the early nineteen seventies, when he was working as a professor at the Fuller School of World Missions, a newly instituted section of the larger Fuller Seminary. Wagner's dissection of the EID "reach Bolivia for Christ" campaign not only was frank in observing how evangelicals were fairing, but it was also forthright in identifying which group was succeeding where Wagner's own Evangelicals had failed. And that successful group was the Pentecostals.

Wagner's examination of Pentecostal success, not just in Bolivia, but in all of Latin America, was published in 1973 monograph, with the off-putting title *Look Out! The Pentecostals Are Coming*.²⁰ The title, reminiscent of a Saturday afternoon horror matinee, echoes the then-regnant American evangelical sense of otherness about Pentecostalism. The book, though, ends up with a surprising endorsement both of Latin American Pentecostal success, and of the tactics through which that success was achieved. Here, Pentecostalism is presented as not a force that evangelicalism is vying with, but rather as a template that a missionary evangelicalism should

¹⁹ Ibid.

adopt. Putting out his aspirations for the book, Wagner states that “[p]rejudice has kept many non-Pentecostals from learning the valuable lessons about effective evangelicalism in Latin America that Pentecostals can teach. I pray that God will use this book to break down some of those long-standing barriers.”²¹

Wagner himself is quite blunt about having shared some of those prejudices when he was a missionary in Bolivia. He describes himself as being a “convinced cessationist” when he was in Bolivia, a man who would preach against a local Pentecostal healing campaign held at the edges of the city because “respectable Christians met in buildings, not in vacant lots.”²² Wagner also recall telling his “people” that the Pentecostal “claims of healing were false and that their true faith in God would be severely damaged if they dared to show up at one of those disreputable gatherings.”²³

Regardless of his in-field prejudice, Wagner acknowledges that the growth of Pentecostalism in Latin America during the twentieth century has been one of the “success stories” for Protestant Christianity. In nineteen hundred, just one year before Agnes Ozman received the gift of tongues in Topeka Kansas, Wagner estimates that there were only 50,000 Protestant adherents in Latin America; by the year 2000, which laid twenty-seven years in the future when Wagner’s book was published, he estimates that Latin American will be the home for 100,000,000 Protestant believers, most of which will be Pentecostal.²⁴ This was a slight overshoot - at the dawn of the new millennium, there were actually an estimated sixty-four million Latin American Protestants. This is an impressive number, but still about thirty-six million short of what Wagner envisioned.

²⁰ C. Peter Wagner, *Look out! The Pentecostals are coming* (Carol Stream, Ill., Creation House 1973)

²¹ Wagner, *Look out!*, 13.

²² Wagner, *Wrestling*, 115, 117.

²³ Wagner, *Wrestling*, 117

²⁴ Wagner, *Look Out!*, 25

The point is not that Wagner failed in his prognostication, but rather that he was so enamoured of Pentecostal success that the one hundred million mark was imaginable for him, a value he extracted from the then-current tangent of Pentecostal growth. Pentecostal growth was the controlling variable here because Wagner considered Pentecostalism to in effect *the* engine of Protestant growth in Latin America; Wagner estimates that at the time he was writing, nearly *two-thirds* of all Latin American Protestants were Pentecostal, and that this condition would either continue into the future - or would intensify. For Wagner, in Latin America at least, Protestant success was in effect only Pentecostal success.

Wagner cites numerous reasons for this Pentecostal growth. He claims that a historic tendency of Pentecostals to come from lower socio-economic standing gives Pentecostal missionaries an edge in recruiting proletarian and peasants populations, who make up the majority of the region's people. He also credits a great deal of the success to Pentecostal practices of immediately integrating believers into the church; by contrast, he presents Evangelicals and Fundamentalists as seeing their mission completed at the moment of conversion, an approach that runs a higher risk of these conversions simply not taking.

Wagner also suggests that a Pentecostal focus on planting new churches, rather than growing already existing churches, is important. Even the increased tendency of Pentecostalism to go through church or denominational splits is identified as a positive, since this multiplies churches, and after splits both parties tend to grow numerically. Wagner also credits Pentecostals with a more complete mobilisation of the church membership in evangelising efforts, which works not only to increase yield; this is also a way of identifying and training people whose talents might make them possible pastors themselves in the future, an operation that is easier to carry out if spiritual baptism and on-the-street apprenticeship training can do the work that normally occurs through years of seminary

education. Finally, unlike other Protestant liturgies, Latin American Pentecostal services are presented as being ‘culturally relevant,’ which is Wagner’s term for religious material crafted to secular sensibilities and aesthetics; this is a vision of worship with guitars and accordions instead of pipe organs, which to Wagner’s mind makes Pentecostal services that much more enjoyable for adherents.

The strategies that Wagner believed he identified in Latin American Pentecostalism seem to mainly to be about leveraging individual attention and energies, and they will also be found in the Vineyard once it comes into being. But these are all new modes of social organisation that could be taken up by Evangelicals without adopting some of the core practices associated with Pentecostalism.

There are other suggestions by Wagner, though, that flirt with a reconfiguration of Evangelicalism, and an adoption of not just peripheral Pentecostal modes of social organisation, but fundamental orientations towards authority and affect. We see this in Wagner’s call for a new pneumatology, for speaking in tongues, and for praying for the sick. For Wagner, Pentecostal pneumatology is as much a problem as an opportunity. Wagner acknowledges that the sort of “regeneration” seen in converts to Pentecostalism can only be understood as the work of the Holy Spirit. In Wagner’s eyes, though, this engenders a tendency for Pentecostals to see their high levels of conversion as evidence that they “have a corner on the Holy Spirit,” that “the Holy Spirit is working only in Pentecostalism,” and that the Spirit “is not to be found in other churches.”²⁵

This gives rise to two problems: a Pentecostal triumphalism, which Wagner decries, and an Evangelical rejection *carte blanche* of Pentecostal claims regarding the Holy Spirit. For Wagner, both positions are in error here, as he holds that “Pentecostal doctrines of the Holy Spirit probably is somewhat

²⁵ Wagner, *Look Out!*, 30

less significant than Pentecostals like to think, and somewhat more significant than non-Pentecostals like to think.”²⁶

Part of the difference between Evangelical and Pentecostal Pneumatology is merely in degree of emphasis, which Wagner suggests should not be a problem for American Evangelicalism of this period; the real problem was the initial evidence doctrine, where tongues is the sole acceptable index of infilling by the Holy Ghost. But noting that initial evidence is not a uniform position, he sees this doctrine as incidental to Pentecostal growth, and perhaps even a drag on it. Initial evidence, therefore, is one bit of Pentecostalism that evangelicals can dispense with when they are pillaging the charismatic tool-shed. Tongues are an acceptable form of ecstatic prayer, but nothing more.

For Wagner, though, the exemplary Pentecostal charisma is not speaking in tongues, but healing. Part of this has to do with participation rates; drawing on extant studies, he estimates that far more Latin American Pentecostals pray for healing than speak in tongues. Wagner sees this as in part a reaction to poverty, with Pentecostals turning towards the only medical system that many of them can afford; but he also sees healing as part of a concerted effort to grow the religion. Wagner notes an Evangelical antipathy to healing, in which supernatural cures are looked down on as something less than salvation. But Wagner also notes that for Pentecostals, salvation is brought about by healing, or rather, healing is evidentially powerful, compelling those healed to convert.

This is a rather utilitarian take on Pentecostal healing; in fact, Wagner’s entire analysis is relentlessly ends-related. The only break from a continual cost-benefits analysis is the occasional colourful illustrative passage featuring one Latin American Pentecostal or another, and one senses that in the end these figures are there as much as guarantors of Wagner’s

²⁶ Wagner, *Look Out!*, 33

knowledge of the subject as much as they are case studies to be learned from.

This instrumentalism in Wagner's early work is important. To know why, it helps to know a little bit about the institution that Wagner's joined after this time in Bolivia, the before mentioned School of World Missions (now called the "School of Intercultural Studies"), located at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, California. While this talk is going to focus on the "SWM," we should note that Fuller Seminary is itself a storied institution, founded by radio revivalist Charles Fuller in 1947 with the intention of restoring what was felt to be a lack of wider respect for Theologically Conservative Protestant scholarship; debates in that school ended up as one of the catalysts for the neo-Evangelical break with Fundamentalism that occurred in the Post World War 2 years in the United States. Fuller was the scholarly space where American Evangelical intellectuals did the most to free themselves from both dispensation and inerrancy, the two most problematic inheritances from early 20th century American Fundamentalism.²⁷

Interestingly enough, the School of World Missions itself did not begin as an organ of this seminary; rather, it was originally founded in Eugene, Oregon in 1957 as an independent entity. The institution was set up by Donald McGavran, a mainline protestant missionary to India who was disenchanted with a perceived missions emphasis on social works as opposed to Evangelism. Unsupported by his denomination, the institute had a hardscrabble start: its physical plant was a just a single spare room in the corner of a library that belonged an unaffiliated Christian College. Only in 1965 was the SWM adopted by Fuller; the adoption was an attempt to balance the then-new Fuller School of Psychology, an initiative that struck some of the School of Theology faculty members as too humanistic.

²⁷ See George Marsden, *Reforming fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the new evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 1987).

The SWM's initial autonomy is important because, as the head of an originally independent institution, Donald McGavran had a high degree of freedom in determining how the school should be organized, and his choices would have far-ranging effects. One of the effects was to ensure that the school acted as a testing ground for what McGavran understood to be a new Christian science. Despite its name, McGavran saw the SWM not as engaging in missiology, but rather as a proving ground for an academic and empirical discipline that McGavran called "Church Growth." Church Growth could be separated from missiology in that missiology was, in McGavran's eyes, unsystematized and predicated on hearsay and anecdotal evidence, while church growth was a self-conscious integration of a positivist social science and theology, fulfilling the Great Commission in a quantitatively verifiable manner.

The vision of church growth was that while in one sense God is in heaven, in another sense of the word God is also in the details, and that the details were capable of being conveyed quantitatively. As a break with missiology, McGavran pioneered a technique through which growth could be numerically charted and classified - is this growth through biological reproduction, conversion, or transfer from other Christian Groups? Just as important for McGavran was identifying the social groups within which growth was occurring. Borrowing from structural-functionalist social anthropology, McGavran created technical means for the "identification" of homogenous, bounded "people groups," as well as a metric for identifying the degrees of social distance between any two people groups.

There were two purposes for all this quantification and systematizing. The first was to allow for a crafting and testing of hypotheses regarding the causes of church growth, all of which could be articulated in a demographic-language borrowed from the "harder" social sciences. The second purpose, however, regarded quantification at a different level. By charting how various churches were growing, and what kind of growth they were experiencing, it would now be possible to allocate resources, both

human and financial, in places where there would be the most 'reward' for the investment. For McGavran, the parable of the sower was not that mustard seeds are to be scattered indiscriminately, but rather that some soils were better than others.

As stated, the SWM was originally envisioned as a place where this quantification could be championed – but also as a space where hypotheses derived 'from the field' could be traded, to see how they would work out in other domains. As such it was no accident that when he set up the school, McGavran originally demurred from offering degrees to merely aspirant missionaries, who would come with little data and fewer ideas from the missions field; it was his desire rather to educate only already practicing missionaries on furlough (for instance, three years of foreign service and fluency in a field language was an original entrance requirement for students). The purpose behind this arrangement was that this would help position the schools as a central hub through which church-growth information would flow globally; in a sense, it was an attempt to make the very campus itself part of a recording apparatus as it not only served to distribute church growth findings, but became a node to which field-reports could be brought and pooled for testing purposes.²⁸

And one of the first problems that the SWM turned to was the difficulty posed by indigenous practices that were considered 'supernatural' or 'magical' in nature. The problem was not the presence or continuing-acceptability of magic in recently converted populations, but rather the danger caused by its *absence*. The difficulty was that conversion had taken too well. This was a particular concern for SWM faculty who had a background in anthropology. While they would end up going quite different ways, both Paul Hiebert and Charles Kraft were experienced missionaries with cultural anthropologic training. Kraft reported that, when participating in missions work with the Higi in Nigeria, he was repeatedly asked by recent

²⁸ See Charles Kraft, *SWM/SIS at forty: a participant/observer's view of our history* (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 2005).

converts what the practical Christian response was to evil spirits, a question he felt he had no adequate answer for. Hiebert noted a similar phenomenon in his work in India; during a smallpox outbreak, unlike the other inhabitants of the village, converted Christians had no 'supernatural' method to treat themselves that comported with their understanding of the tenets of their faith.

Hiebert gave a name to the Evangelical-caused vacuum in magic. Framing it as an inability to conceive of ways of engaging with supernatural forces that are imagined to occupy an intermediary space between the human and the fully divine, he labelled it the "flaw of the excluded middle."²⁹ Hiebert closed with a suggestion that this flaw might, in some ways, be evangelical Christianity's strength as well. The final scene in the essay is of villagers becoming not less interested in Christianity after the smallpox epidemic, but rather more open, moved by the way that a funeral for a small child displayed both the resolve of the village Christians and their faith in the resurrection. This might have been God's purpose, Hiebert offers, and warns the reader against making "Christianity a new magic in which we as gods can make God do our bidding."³⁰

In contrast, Kraft's solution is to adopt Wagner's solution to the challenge posed by Pentecostal growth. Kraft in effect was suggesting that the Pentecostalisation of Evangelical missions would not only serve as stop-gap against Pentecostal competition, but would also enable a way of competing with non-Christian supernatural practices. Kraft was not alone. Even McGavran was becoming more interested in what could be done with Christian healing, stating in a 1979 lecture that it was "unscientific" to "close one's eyes to the fact of faith healing" and that at "suitable times" it should be introduced as way of accelerating Church Growth.³¹

²⁹ Paul Hiebert, "The Flaw of the Excluded Middle," *Missiology: An international review* 10(1982): 35-47.

³⁰ Hiebert, *Flaw*, 47.

³¹ Donald McGavran, "Divine Healing and Church Growth" in *Power Evangelism* (Vineyard International Ministries, 1984). This is not the John Wimber and Kevin Springer text of the

In one way this is not too surprising; as far back as 1969, there are accounts of discussions at Fuller School of World Mission about the higher growth rate of Pentecostalism, giving rise to Wagner's *Look Out*.³² But there has been one subtle shift. In Wagner's earlier account, Pentecostal capacity to engage in supernatural feats such as healing and deliverances were only one aspect, and in some ways not the most important aspect, of the Pentecostal church-growth apparatus. More importantly, divine healing and demonic deliverance will achieve its effects because it plays to the interests of the population; its truth is to some degree beside the point. In these later accounts, though, we are seeing an interest specifically in these Pentecostal-type supernatural practices, and a shift from stressing that their effectivity lies in speaking to a particular audience, to stressing that they are valid because of the supernatural effects they achieve. It is not that people are going to Pentecostals because there is no other place to go for healing - it is that they are going to Pentecostals because Pentecostal healing *works*.

ii

The difficulty is that granting the charismatic gifts an effectivity is not the same thing as being able to invoke those gifts. In short, neither McGavarn, Wagner, nor Kraft had any idea how to preform any of the charismata they now found themselves endorsing. Learning it from American Pentecostals was not an option: again and again, either in writings and during public interviews, Wagner and Kraft say that they were hampered by their perception of American Pentecostals as not just doctrinally suspect, but as just plain *weird*. Kathryn Kuhlman in particular is mentioned, serving as a metonymic representation of all that was unsettling in Pentecostal practice. This weirdness probably has several roots. It was most likely an expression

same name, but rather a series of printed commentaries in a three ring binder that was suppose to accompany the Wimber-Springer text during Vineyard training exercises.

³² Charles Kraft, *Christianity with power: your worldview and your experience of the supernatural* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Vine Books, 1989), 6.

of the self-perceived class difference between Evangelicals and Pentecostals that was referenced earlier; part of it no doubt was also a reaction to Kuhlman's heavily mannered public speaking style, a mode of self-presentation which ran contrary to a wider Protestant speech ethic valuing sincerity and transparency in language.³³

What they needed was someone who could engage in Pentecostal gifts, and who they were not nervous around. That person would be John Wimber; an affable colleague with Evangelical credentials, Kathryn Kuhlman he was not. From 1974 to 1978, Wimber was responsible for a new initiative of Wagner's: taking the Church Growth techniques McGavran originally forged for the missions field, and bringing them to domestic Evangelicals. Wimber was a former pastor of an Evangelical Quaker church in Yorba Linda, California, the same part of Orange County that Richard Nixon came from; despite his Quaker background, he was a committed cessationist. By the mid-seventies, that actually put him out of step with the faculty that he was closest to in the Fuller School of World Missions; there is a story of him walking out, seemingly in some mixture of disbelief and amazement, of a meeting at Fuller when some faculty were recounting hearsay miracles.

By the late 1970s, though, Wimber's position had substantially changed. Overworked and in need of inspiration, Wimber started pastoring a church on the weekends, experimenting directly with the Church growth techniques that had been honed outside of the United States. Much of what he employed was the more tradition social-science orientated techniques

³³ On Kuhlman, see Todd V. Lewis, "Charisma and Media Evangelists: An explication and model of communication influence," *Southern Communication Journal* 54(1988):93-111; On Protestant speech ethic, see Webb Keane, *Christian moderns: freedom and fetish in the mission encounter* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 2007). This Protestant speech ethic still exerts some influence in the contemporary Vineyard, though it ironically has been supplemented by other speech ethics that have a structural, if not genealogical, kinship with that of Kuhlman: see Jon Bialecki, "No Caller ID for the Soul: Demonization, Charisms, and the Unstable Subject of Protestant Language Ideology," *Anthropological Quarterly* 84(2011): 679-703.

from the McGavran period; for much of the eighties Church Growth continued to be an element of not only his church, but of future Vineyard church conferences and training for church-planters, and even to this date there is among many older Vineyard pastors an interest in the sort of business-efficiency literature that that the Church Growth movement fetishized.

However, more than anything else, it was healing that fuelled the rapid growth of Wimber's church, which in five years went from begin a small home church to having a couple two-to-three thousand person large services each Sunday. Attendees consisted primarily of people who either participated in, or were attempting to emulate, the Jesus People movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s.³⁴ By the early eighties, Kraft and Wagner started regularly making the one-hour drive south from Pasadena to Yorba Linda to see how Wimber's church was developing.

It was about this time that Wimber, who was already teaching part of a Church Growth course at Fuller as an adjunct, offered to also teach a course on healing. Kraft and Wagner felt obliged to first offer this to Fuller Seminary, since it came out of an "American Church," but the seminary declined. Deciding to offer it themselves, in the winter term of 1982 the school of World Missions listed a course called "MC510: Signs, Wonders, and Church Growth," taught from seven to ten on Monday evenings; about seventy people were enrolled, and both Wagner and Kraft attended each session as well. Technically Wagner was the actual course convener, but the *de facto* instructor was Wimber.

The class had two parts: first, a lecture by Wimber, and afterwards, a practicum, where students would attempt to heal other students on stage, all while Wimber gave running commentary. The lecture half of the class

³⁴ In fact, around this time Lonnie Frisbee, an influential figure in the original Jesus People movement in the sixties, had joined Wimber's church in a leadership capacity. *Frisbee the life and death of a hippie preacher*. Directed by David Di Sabatino (Passion River Productions, Inc, 2008), DVD.

left little impression. Wimber's lecture notes are incredibly vague, and I have never talked to anyone who took the class who had a very detailed memory of what was covered. The Fuller library reserves list gives us something: it consists of books by David Yonggi Cho on growing "cell groups," Hollenweger's "The Pentecostals," and numerous books by the Catholic Charismatic Francis McNutt; the list even includes one of the classic cessationist texts, Warfield's "Counterfeit Miracles."³⁵ Just as notable is the presence of important Church-Growth texts, like Alan Tippett's "People Movements in South Polynesia."

The lecture notes are another clue: a review of "Signs and Wonders in the Bible," a brief tour of the miraculous through Church History, and case studies of "signs and wonders" from "abroad." The last is interesting, in how it again suggests the ties between this class and anxieties about worldwide global and Pentecostal Christianity. Along the same lines was Wimber's discussion of the relationship between culture and a capacity to invoke the Holy Spirit. Borrowing Kraft's term for culture, Wimber states that various "worldviews" obscure or facilitate charismata: the "western" worldview, characterised by 'secularism,' 'self-reliance,' 'materialism' and rationalism' is an impediment to praying in the Holy Spirit, but by ways of contrast, various non-western world views, including the "Christian Worldview," facilitate it.³⁶

What happened in the second half of each class, though, is more clear. A sense of how instruction went for the applied section is found in course log

³⁵ Walter Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals: the charismatic movement in the churches*, (Minneapolis, Augsburg Pub. House 1972); Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Counterfeit miracles* (New York, C. Scribner's, 1918).

³⁶ This is drawn from John Wimber's lecture notes for the first offering of the class, archived in the John Wimber Collection, which housed in the library at Regent University; this reading of the material is informed by John Wimber and Kevin Springer, *Power Evangelism* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1986). Wimber and Springer's course presents itself as partially based on the notes for the course, and sources who have attended the class and are also familiar with both the production and content of the book have confirmed this.

reports of Wimber's pneumatic grand rounds.³⁷ In one case, a student comes to the stage, complaining about back pain. Wimber first interviews her, to try to determine all he can about the symptoms of the disease she wants healed. Next, prays for her - we are told that Wimber held her hands, and then "spoke to the pain in her back, spoke to her glands and commanded them to be well." Wimber then explains that he first formed a personal connection with the student through the 'prayer interview,' and that he then 'was exercising authority over the illness.' He bids the audience to take a look at the transient affective moments of the person being prayed for, the small tells that allow one to know the process is advancing. "When the Holy Spirit rests upon a person," we're told, "there are many symptoms, such as a fluttering of the eyelids, and a sheen on the face."

This was not an isolated occurrence. The same course log lists words of knowledge received: on the first day of class, Wimber reports that one student will have her stomach flu's symptoms temporarily abated, only to return again as "an attack of the devil." At this point "she will have to make a decision ... whether she will have healing or not." Sometimes people demurred when there were specific words of knowledge: no one responded when there was a word of knowledge about a "yeast infection," though a woman came forward after class the next week to report the condition being cured. Often a word of knowledge would be given, garnering no response at all ("angina" and "cystitis," and repeated words of knowledge about toothaches, for instance, went unanswered).

Words of knowledge usually lead to prayer and healing, though. One student received prayer from peers for a sore throat after Wimber gives a word of knowledge about a systematic, long running ear, nose, and throat infection; the log reports that "while the group was still praying she said 'I'm healed!'" and notes that she "[l]eft with a slight sore throat." Malaria,

³⁷ These notes on class proceedings are archived in the John Wimber Collection, Regent University.

dislocated fingers, various colds and various sprains, and are all listed as being healed during the run of the course; at one point a “spirit of allergies” is cast out. Even faculty were affected. Peter Wagner’s high blood pressure is healed at one point; during the prayer for Wagner’s condition, Wimber notes for the benefit of the class “Peter’s ... fluttering eyelids” and his “heavy breathing.”³⁸

The log also informs us of material that occurred after or outside of class. One student self-report “body tingles and muscle spasms” as he fought spiritual oppression; matter-of-factly another log states that after class, four students were “slain in the spirit.” We are told about other extra-class incidents, like a lump in the side that shrunk to half its size. One telegraphically condensed report read thus: “Chinese lady with advanced cancer in lung, throat. (Bad breath stopped the next day). This lady was a backslidden Christian, and during prayer she was ‘slain in the spirit.’”

Despite its formal status as a clinic, Wimber at times also seemed to present the class as something that stood outside not only the formal rules of the academy, but its scholastic imperative as well; one student who would go on to become a Vineyard pastor recalls being seen in the audience by Wimber. At the time Wimber’s eyes caught him, the student was holding Greek flash-cards in his hand; during the raucous prayer session that shortly ensued Wimber shouted out to him (apparently in reference to the student’s earlier attempt at multi-tasking), “This is a lot better than parsing Greek verbs, isn’t it?”

The course was well received, though that does not mean that there was not some criticism. The student comments turned in at the end of the first term contained the usual complaints about course mechanics (too much time wasted in outlining the course, dissatisfaction about the small size of the room, and unhappiness with the syllabus, which had numerous typos

³⁸ This account is confirmed both by statements made by Wagner himself (Wrestling, 130-131), as well as by accounts from interviews.

and misspelled the names of some healers). These complaints were often joined with lists of specific miracles that the student had performed or received. Many called for 'more doing,' or for the lecture portion to be shortened to make way for time for prayer.

But primarily the comments were affirmations of the course and the subject. There were statements such as "this course has changed my life." One called the class the most "practical" taken at Fuller. Another student went further, suggesting a global historical importance, stating confidently that "this course will change the world." The comments from other students stress the orientation to global Christianity, offering statements such as "It's nice to see what God's doing in the rest of the world." Many state that they will be using these techniques when they return to the missions field; this is fitting, seeing how it was the competitive ability of Evangelical missions that had motivated this turn to the charismatic in the first place.

Not long after the first course was completed, the American Christian media started circulating reports about it; in October of 1982 *Christian Life* magazine devoted a special issue to it, which was reprinted as a book in the next year, and Fuller began to receive what has been described as 'overwhelming' mail and phone-calls.³⁹ Not all were positive. While many called to support the class, or even to inquire about the possibility of taking it, many others were alarmed by the introduction of Pentecostal practices in what was then arguably America's lead Evangelical seminary. By 1985 this came to a head, and the course was cancelled, with a book length committee report documenting the decision published in 1987.⁴⁰ Part of complaint was about the bureaucratic mechanics. There were claims that Wimber as an adjunct should not have been teaching the course, which

³⁹ C. Peter Wagner, editor, *Signs and Wonders Today: new expanded edition with study questions and applications* (Altamonte Springs, FL : Creation House, 1987).

⁴⁰ Lewis Smedes, *Ministry and the miraculous: a case study at Fuller Theological Seminary* (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1987).

seems like an objection invented after the fact.⁴¹ At another point the report states that the class's disruptive effects were a more important issue. We are told that "[f]aculty members were called to counsel students or members of their families when disillusionment followed their failure to experience the power of healing proclaimed in the classroom; a few persons were caught in a backlash of naïve attempts to discern demons."⁴²

The report also mentions a complaint that seems to have been the real nub of the problem: "John Wimber – founder of the Vineyard movement and adjunct instructor along with C. Peter Wagner and Charles Kraft, our professors responsible for the course – came to be linked much more closely with Fuller in the minds of the public than his busy schedule of pastoral and conference ministry warranted; his audiences and readers were tempted to impute his opinions and approaches to our faculty more readily than the facts would support."⁴³ In short, the course had made Wimber a celebrity in Evangelical and Charismatic circles, and Fuller was imagined as unquestioningly endorsing all that Wimber said. For an institution that saw itself as having only recently overcome Fundamentalist supernaturalism for a moderate Evangelical rationalism that could engage with the wider scholarly world, this was a disaster.⁴⁴ What was worse was that it was spilling over to other courses. I have been told about different class sessions at Fuller during this period beginning with long student-led invocatory prayers against demonic forces who sought to wage spiritual warfare against the course, instructor, and students; this is not what the more classically evangelical faculty wanted Fuller's profile to be. A new

⁴¹ There were numerous letters written before the fact showing Wagner, Wimber, and Pierson, the dean of the School of World Missions, getting advanced approval for both the course and for Wimber's participation. Before the course was taught, there was a letter to Wimber from Wagner, which were cc'd to Dan Pierson, the Dean of the school, in this letter Wimber is 'formally invited' by the SWM faculty to teach the course. There is another letter explaining that it was to be listed as co-taught by Wagner and Wimber. Furthermore there were letters from Pierson himself discussing Wimber's remuneration (\$990) for his part in the course, and many letters to Pierson from Wimber referring to 'his' course.

⁴² Smedes, *Ministry*, 7.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Marsden, *Reforming*, 292-295.

version of the class was offered, this time taught by Paul Hiebert, who was never close to Wimber despite Wimber's adoption of much of Hiebert's language.⁴⁵ In Hiebert's version of the class, cessationist views were given equal time, and there was no applied section.

Conclusion

But by then it was too late. Kraft and Wagner had changed, Church Growth had changed, and the Vineyard had changed too. The shift in church growth was in some ways most obvious. The shift to the miraculous denatured both the sureness, the positivism, and the utilitarianism that was the initial promise of McGavran's church growth movement.⁴⁶ Part of this has to do with a reimagination of who the vital actors were. The miraculous was understood not to be a function of the evangelist's own exercise of agency, but rather the Holy Spirit's. Here, all initiatives comes either from God or from evil spirits; this is in opposition to the old Church Growth model, where initiatives were human initiatives, and the question was not

⁴⁵ During talks, but in writing as well, Wimber would often positively reference Hiebert's work on bounded versus centred sets as ecclesiastical forms. See, e.g., John Wimber, *Staying Focused: Vineyard as a Centered Set*, *Vineyard Reflections: John Wimber Leadership Letter* (July 1995-February 1996); On centred and bounded set theory, see Paul Hiebert, *Sets and Structures: A Study of Church Patterns, And Reply to Respondents*. In D. J. Hesselgrave, *New Horizons in World Mission: Evangelicals and the Christian Mission in the 1980s* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979). After Hiebert left Fuller for a post a Trinity, he would co-edit a monograph critical of Wimber and of the Vineyard, which included a contribution that he penned himself. James Robert Coggins and Paul G Hiebert, editors, *Wonders and the word: an examination of issues raised by John Wimber and the Vineyard movement* (Winnipeg, MB; Hillsboro, KS: Kindred Press, 1989).

⁴⁶ Evidence for this can be seen through comparing the differences between the first 1970 and the third 1990 editions of Donald McGavran's *Understanding Church Growth*, a book that I have head sometimes called (with tongue in cheek) "The Church Growth Bible." The first edition contains no domestic examples, favoring the non-Western missions field, and does not address the sort of supernatural phenomena that held Wagner's interest. The third edition, which was revised and edited by C. Peter Wagner, not only contains examples taken from inside the United States, but has an additional section entitled "Divine Healing and Church Growth." Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids, Michigan William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co. 1970); Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*. 3rd ed. Revised and edited by C. Peter Wagner (Grand Rapids, Michigan William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co. 1990).

whether they sprang from God, but rather were pleasing to him to the degree that they were carrying out the great commission. This loss of a kind of agency also means a loss of sureness. Working with an 'already/not-yet' logic in which the Kingdom of God was supernaturally present, but only at times and not in any predictable way, means that one can't count on techniques working automatically.⁴⁷ One cannot know in advance whether a prayer request will succeed. So much for the certitude given by Church Growth's empirically tested tenets.

But there was a shift that was in some ways more subtle than the shift from the agentive and the sure. It was a shift what might be called the chief mode of intelligible apprehension. As stated, for the Church Growth movement, things were actual if they were numerable, which had roots in a kind of scientism which, as Matthew Engelke's work on the history of the British and Foreign Bible Society suggests, has its own Evangelical lineage.⁴⁸ Just as much as it is numerical, though, it is a form of thought that lives in an abstract yet chartable space. Exquisite attention is given in Church Growth literature to when a bar graph as opposed to a line-graph should be used, and to the advantages and disadvantages of charting information on semi-logarithmic graph paper. This spatialization of the temporal also serves not only to disaggregate time, but make both it and the demographic data embedded in it quantum in nature, fixed in a series of snap-shot-like measured amounts. Indeed, the intelligibility of numbers by their being spatially fixed and broken into discrete instances is in some ways the core of the Church Growth project as a mode of representation.

⁴⁷ Jon Bialecki, "Disjuncture, Continental philosophy's new 'political Paul,' and the question of progressive Christianity in a Southern California Third Wave church," *American Ethnologist* 36(2009): 110-123.

⁴⁸ Mathew Engelke, "Number and the Imagination of Global Christianity; or, Mediation and Immediacy in the Work of Alain Badiou" *South Atlantic Quarterly* 109(2010):811-829.

By way of contrast, I would say that after charismatiszation, the chief mode of apprehension is a qualitative one, shot through with various registers of affective intensity, and prone to stark discontinuities. The vision of church growth - and of religious life in general - was not an increasing line segment that measured a growing congregation, but a surge of power associated with the Holy Spirit and revival, indexed not just by miracles, but by physical and emotional intensities as well. As such, this was a measure of 'success' that resisted quantification, spoken about in gradations (a 'powerful' church conference, someone 'blessed' with gifts, a church service where the Holy Spirit 'poured out') that resisted comparison because they were in the end speaking not about types, but about singularities, irreproducible events comprised of unique constellations of particular peoples, places, and moments. This does not mean that quantification, or at least the deployment of numbers, disappeared, of course, but rather that their role changed. Numbers were no longer for use through comparison with other numbers, presented in sets, but instead were presented singularly, as a sign of the power of the associated event, or as a phantasmic (and hence supernatural) goal - a boast of planting a hundred new churches in a year, a vision of ten thousand churches that will be planted. This also meant that there was a certain emphasis on the now, on what God was *doing* through the church in *this instant*, that differed from Church Growth's more longitudinal sensibility, made of "homogenous, empty, time."⁴⁹

There were effects on the Vineyard as well, ones that could be seen as the compliment of the effects on Church Growth. Wimber's prayer practice, which he would latter call "Power Evangelism," was in the end a foreign object translated into the technical argot of church growth, and intended to be transmitted in a pedagogical setting (even if Wimber's clinics were a teaching environment like no other to date in the academy). Because of

⁴⁹ Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York, Harcourt, Brace & World, 1968), 261.

this, I would argue, we find odd moments of an instrumentalization of charismata in Wimber; this differs from the Pentecostal gifts, which were not made for a didactic situation. This is an instrumentalization not in the sense of a human control over the phenomenon, but rather a feeling that the language of procedure and process could convey how to account for and engage in this work, be it either the actual prayer itself, or the at once supplementary yet central testimony regarding it. We see this frequently in Wimber's presentations, ranging from the endorsement of a ten point "Engel scale" to fix one's exact stage in the evangelizing process, to the schematic five step, prayer-interview checklist for spiritual healing that was a Vineyard hallmark during the eighties and early nineties.

The change to note, though, is not the way that a charismatic movement became schematised, or how a schematic intellectual movement became charismatic. What should be noted is that both were reactions to a crisis located not in the heart of the third wave, not in California, but in the places referred to then as the third world. Whatever else this means, it suggests that even in the late 20th century, to speak unproblematically of a Christian metropole and a Christian periphery is a mistake, and that seemingly unconnected movements can have the same red thread running through them. The third wave and the third world were geographically separate, but in other ways quite close; but the details of the institutional paths that charismata traversed as it jumped that gap would still leave a mark on an influential part of the late 20th century's charismatic revival.