The Role of Faith in Christian Faith-Based Humanitarian Agencies: Constructing the Taxonomy

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Abstract This article sets out to establish a taxonomy of Christian faith-based humanitarian agencies, challenging assumptions that such agencies are similarly informed by Christian theology and pursue a uniform mission. Christian principles and missionary efforts are central in the development of humanitarianism, and the agencies associated with the Christian tradition comprise a prominent and growing portion of international humanitarian agencies. Little, however, is known about how Christian faith-based agencies diverge from one another in their orientation and operations, how their theological tradition shapes their humanitarianism, and whether or how they are distinct from secular agencies. Examining the humanitarianism of Christian faith-based agencies in light of their theological roots, this article delineates three classifications of Christian faith-based agencies: Accommodative–Humanitarian, Synthesis–Humanitarian, and Evangelistic–Humanitarian agencies. The study demonstrates the importance of distinguishing not simply between faith-based and secular agencies, but among faith-based agencies themselves.

Résumé Cet article se propose d'établir une taxinomie d'agences humanitaires basées sur la foi chrétienne, faisant défi aux présupposés que de telles agences sont informées de façon semblable par la théologie chrétienne et poursuivent une mission uniforme. Les principes chrétien et les efforts des missionnaires constituent une partie centrale dans le développement de l'humanitarisme, et les agences associées à la tradition chrétienne se composent d'une portion de premier plan et en croissance des agences humanitaires internationales. Très peu, cependant, est connu concernant la façon dont les agences basées sur la foi chrétienne divergent l'une de l'autre dans leur orientation et opérations, comment leur tradition théologique forment leur

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humanitarisme, et si ou comment elles sont distinctes de la mission laïque. En examinant l'humanitarisme des agences de la foi chrétienne à la lumière de leurs racines théologiques, cet article délimite trois classification de la foi chrétienne basées sur les institutions : institutions humanistes accommodantes, de synthèse et évangélistes. L'étude fait la démonstration de l'importance de la distinction non simplement entre les institutions se basant sur la foi et la laïcité, mais parmi les institutions basées elles-mêmes sur la foi.

Zusammenfassung Dieser Artikel hat es sich zum Ziel gesetzt, humanitäre Organisationen, die auf christlichem Glauben basieren, zu klassifizieren und stellt dabei die Annahme, dass solche Organisationen auf christlicher Theologie basieren und dieselbe Mission verfolgen, in Frage. Christliche Prinzipien und missionarische Bemühungen stehen im Mittelpunkt der Entwicklung einer humanitären Einstellung und mit christlicher Tradition assoziierte Organisationen stellen einen bedeutenden und wachsenden Anteil unter internationalen humanitären Organisationen. Allerdings ist wenig drüber bekannt, wie Organisationen, die auf christlichem Glauben basieren, sich voneinander in Orientierung und Operation unterscheiden, wie deren theologische Tradition deren Humanität beeinflusst und ob oder wie sie sich von säkularen Organisationen unterscheiden. Die Humanität von auf christlichem Glauben basierenden Organisationen unter Berücksichtigung ihrer theologischen Wurzeln begutachtend, beschreibt dieser Artikel drei Gruppen von auf christlichem Glauben basierenden Organisationen: versorgend–humanitär, synthetisch–humanitär und evangelistisch–humanitär. Die Studie zeigt, wie wichtig es ist, nicht einfach zwischen auf Glauben basierenden und säkularen Organisationen zu unterscheiden, sondern auch unter den auf Glauben basierenden Organisationen selbst.

Resumen Este trabajo pretende establecer una taxonomía de las organizaciones humanitarias religiosas cristianas y cuestiona las ideas de que estas organizaciones tienen en común su teología cristiana y persiguen una misión similar. Los principios cristianos y los esfuerzos misionarios son vitales para el desarrollo del humanitarismo y las organizaciones relacionadas con la tradición cristiana suponen una porción creciente y significativa de las organizaciones humanitarias internacionales. Poco se sabe sin embargo sobre qué es lo que diferencia a las agencias religiosas cristianas entre sí en cuanto a orientación y trabajos, cómo influye su tradición teológica en su humanitarismo y si se distinguen de las organizaciones seculares. Este trabajo, que analiza el humanitarismo de las organizaciones religiosas cristianas desde el punto de vista de sus raíces teológicas, esboza tres clasificaciones de organizaciones religiosas cristianas: las acomodativas-humanitarias, las sintéticas-humanitarias y las evangelistas-humanitarias. El estudio demuestra la importancia de distinguir no solo entre las organizaciones religiosas y seculares, sino entre las propias organizaciones religiosas.

Introduction

In 2001, humanitarian efforts in Kabul, Afghanistan, were set back when the Taliban expelled all Christian aid agencies in the belief that they were attempting to evangelize the population. Not all Christian faith-based agencies, however, condone evangelism and some distance themselves from their religious tradition in fear that their aid workers will be the target of reprisal—a concern not without cause, or in the belief that religion has nothing to do with the success of their relief and development efforts. What explains the diversity of views and approaches among these agencies? The assumption that Christian faith-based agencies are indistinct from one another obfuscates the dialogue and a clear understanding of the role of Christian faith-based agencies in humanitarianism. They are often spoken of as a homogenous unit, assuming they respond from a similar Christian intuition to the humanitarian crises around the world. This assumption, however, overlooks how variations in the religious roots of these agencies inform divergent modes of humanitarianism.

The lack of scholarship addressing the role of Christian faith-based agencies in humanitarianism is particularly glaring considering their prevalence and importance in the field.[1] Little is known about how Christian beliefs shape the principles and activity of the agencies, how they are distinct from secular agencies, and whether such a distinction is important. In his study of faith-based agencies, Thomas Jeavons emphasizes that "We cannot understand these organizations well, we cannot fully comprehend either what they are or what they should be—at least from the point of view of the traditions that gave them birth, and that they claim to represent—if we do not see how the religious belief system that undergirds them also encourages the integration of service and witness, faith and works, preaching and practice" (Jeavons 1994, p. 46).

Without understanding the role of faith, it is impossible to identify the advantages or drawbacks of faith-based humanitarianism—its inherent tensions. This article lays out distinct variations among Christian aid agencies by examining the theology that informs their humanitarianism and by proposing a taxonomy that explicates how religious principles are translated into humanitarianism and shape the organization and operation of the agencies. The relationship between humanitarianism and Christian theology is not deterministic. Three distinct Christian theologies of humanitarian engagement are proposed: Accommodative–Humanitarianism, Synthesis–Humanitarianism, and Evangelistic–Humanitarianism. However, a few clarifications are in order.

First, the article draws heavily upon and extends Richard Niebuhr's delineation of different theologies of Christian social engagement to examine how Christian theology informs variations in the faith-based agencies. Second, to assess the role of these Christian theologies, the article builds on the insight of other scholars to examine the significance of religion across four dimensions of humanitarian agencies—their express mission, staff policies, ties to religious authorities or

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[1] The analysis of this article is not limited to Protestant Christian agencies. Catholic agencies are included in any reference to Christian agencies unless otherwise noted.

congregations, and sources of donor support. A few agencies are briefly explored as ideal-types of these classifications on the basis of secondary sources and their own public information. Admittedly, fieldwork would enhance the strength of the proposed taxonomy, but the article is a first step toward clearing a path for more systematic analysis of faith-based humanitarian agencies in the field.

Prior to delineating the taxonomy, the article will first examine the rise of Christian humanitarian agencies and introduce the significance of the debate surrounding their role in humanitarianism. Also, to avoid confusion, the article reviews the literature on the distinction between religious and secular agencies and on the ways in which faith is understood to shape faith-based agencies.

Why Does it Matter? The Role and Tensions of Christianity in Humanitarianism

The Rise and Roots of Christian Faith-Based Humanitarianism

Christian missionaries treading the globe during the colonial period were the precursor humanitarians whose sense of Christian duty to "go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" inspired their work (*New International Version Bible*, Mark 16:15). Although often negatively associated with Western imperialism, the missionary efforts also gave rise to Christian humanitarian agencies intent on meeting not only the spiritual, but also the physical needs of their audience. The first religious aid agencies developed in conjunction with the Protestant evangelical movements and the birth of missionary organizations that, in addition to spreading the gospel, were "dedicated to assisting ideologically and economically impoverished peoples, as well as bearing the torch for Western civilization" (Barrow and Jennings 2001, p. 10).[2] Today, this same sense of duty is present in humanitarianism with modern humanitarianism the offspring of nineteenth century Christian thought. Indeed, as Michael Barnett and Thomas Weiss note, "it is Christianity and Christian faith-based organizations that so far have had the most significant influence on contemporary humanitarian action" (Barnett and Weiss 2008, pp. 19–20; see also Lauren 2003). Christian views of love and care for one's neighbor are fundamental to a Western concept of humanitarianism. Barrow and Jennings (2001, p. 9) contend that "the Bible, in particular the New Testament, is perhaps the major guiding charitable text for the Western world, the Good Samaritan principle perhaps the foundation of twentieth century philanthropy and aid."

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[2] In contrast, Abby Stoddard distinguishes between the religious tradition of humanitarian agencies and the secular Dunantist and Wilsonian traditions. In 1864, Henri Dunant founded the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to care for victims of war, creating the first secular humanitarian agency (Barrow and Jennings 2001, p. 10). Save the Children UK and Médecins sans Frontières stem from the Dunantist tradition. Also, in his desire to spread positive US values around the world, US President Woodrow Wilson's vision led to the establishment of agencies such as CARE (Stoddard 2003, p. 27). Modern versions of humanitarian agencies multiplied following the Second World War, increasing in their geographical scope and in their mandate by coupling relief with development and accepting "politics as part of a wider development and crisis discourse" (Barrow and Jennings 2001, p. 11).

Faith-based humanitarian agencies are on the rise. As noted by McCleary and Barro, in the post-Second World War period and particularly since the 1990s, US evangelical agencies dramatically increased as a percentage of the total number of religious agencies engaged in international relief and development work. Additionally, "faith-founded" and mainline protestant organizations also grew, though to a lesser degree.[3] In 2004, evangelical organizations accounted for 33% of all relief and development agencies and 48% of the total number of religious humanitarian agencies (McCleary and Barro 2004, p. 10). Four Protestant and Catholic Christian relief and development agencies alone received a quarter of the $2.5 billion in US government funds granted to aid agencies in 2000 (Stoddard 2003, p. 26). The growth of faith-based humanitarian agencies coincides with a "rapid and dramatic expansion in the role, scope, and financial power of [NGOs]" in the 1980s (Barrow and Jennings 2001, p. 8).[4] Christian faith-based agencies are, therefore, major players in international humanitarianism.

The Tensions of Christian Faith-Based Humanitarianism

As significant actors in humanitarianism, faith-based agencies are noted for a number of contributions. One of the claimed advantages of Christian faith-based agencies is their ability to provide humanitarian assistance through channels not necessarily open to secular agencies. That is, faith-based agencies can coordinate their relief and development efforts through locally based churches and religious communities in the countries of operation (Samuel and Sugden 1999b, p. 398). As a Mercy Corps representative emphasized in a meeting on faith-based agencies hosted by the United States Institute of Peace (2001), "while NGOs don't necessarily do the job better than secular NGOs… they can become connected with and inspire local religious communities, which in turn enhances their effectiveness." Belshaw (2002, p. 90) recounts how, when aid agencies were fleeing a conflict zone in Africa, a Diocesan Director of Development told the concerned United Nations mission, "But the church is always here." The ability of faith-based agencies to build relationships with local churches, therefore, may be a boon to humanitarian efforts.

In her study of two faith-based agencies in Zimbabwe, including World Vision, Bornstein (2005, p. 56) highlights the ability of the agencies to not only connect with but also bring local churches together *across* denominations to meet the needs of the local community. Faith-based agencies are "uniquely equipped to deal with these material and spiritual challenges of faith" and "offer a discursive space where issues of good, of evil, of the injustices of poverty and the moral dangers of individual success, can be discussed alongside fears of demons and hopes of

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[3] While these particular religious agencies have thrived since the pre- and post-Second World War period, Catholic humanitarian organizations have declined as a portion of the total number of religious agencies. In 1940, they comprised 39% of the total, in 1946 they declined to 3%, and in 2004 they represented only 8% of the total number of humanitarian organizations (McCleary and Barro 2004, pp. 9–10).

[4] See also Lindenberg and Bryant (2001) for an overview of the factors bringing about the expansion of relief and development NGOs since the 1970s.

salvation" (ibid. p. 7). In communities where the spiritual is part of everyday life and is the lens through which events are interpreted, the capacity of agencies to understand and work through such dynamics may be integral to their success. For example, Bornstein (2005, p. 49) observes that in the African Christian culture the "realms of the spiritual and material cannot be easily separated: development is both spiritual and material."

Similarly, in discussing a Christian approach to social transformation, Bruce Bradshaw provides many anecdotes of Christian development workers whose work is hampered when they do not recognize and engage the spirituality of the communities. When low rainfall rendered a new irrigation dam useless in a West African village, the community blamed the aid workers for offending the spirits by failing to make sacrifices before building the dam (Bradshaw 2002, p. 70). And when Christian aid workers engineered a new agricultural project in an East African village but failed to consider the project's implications for the religious or spiritual beliefs of the community, the project was jeopardized. The community turned against the villager who benefited from the project in the belief that his success was due to witchcraft. While the agriculturalists felt that "the integrity of their work would be compromised if they raised any unsolicited conversations about their religion," Bradshaw contends that their scientific methods nonetheless had spiritual implications that challenged the local cultural narrative (ibid. p. 69). By offering the Christian narrative of God's relationship to creation and his power over local spirits, the aid workers could have offered an empowering narrative for both the spiritual and material health of the community (ibid. p. 114). As Bornstein's research and these anecdotes suggest, faith-based agencies may be more sensitive to the intersection of spirituality and science in traditional communities and have a comparative advantage over secular agencies in navigating its implications for humanitarian efforts.

On the other hand, there is debate over the actual role of faith in Christian faith-based agencies and the degree to which religion impacts the structure of the agencies and the assistance provided by aid workers. Emphasizing this knowledge gap in the studies of humanitarianism, Barnett (2008, p. 249) notes that "we actually know very little about the connection between religious identity and organizational structure, where an organization is willing to act, who it [is] willing to help, and what kinds of assistance it is willing to provide and under what conditions." This lack of both knowledge and *understanding* of faith-based humanitarianism agencies highlights the necessity to distinguish between the types of faith-based agencies and the influence of religion in their work. Some Christian faith-based agencies may be cause for concern among practitioners in humanitarianism. An agency's religious identity can place a field mission and its representatives at risk in countries where the regime is hostile to Christianity. When the Taliban took control of Kabul in 1997, Christian Aid recounts the scenario, stating, "The very idea of Christianity was dangerous. Even our name was a problem… our field officer [had] to fend off the many threats to our programme and partners—and to reassure the Taliban that we were not promoting Christianity under the guise of being aid workers" (Christian Aid, "About us: Regardless of religion"). Furthermore, Christian Aid recognizes that "even today, we can be threatened by any perception that we are

linked to evangelism" (ibid.). Despite its name, Christian Aid tries to disassociate itself from any perception that it distributes aid with an ulterior religious agenda. This example suggests that faith-based agencies—good intentions aside—may place the safety of their own and other agencies' humanitarian programs and staff in jeopardy.

While Christian Aid emphasizes the danger of and disavows combining religious ambitions with humanitarianism, other Christian humanitarian agencies, such as Samaritan Purse, have an express goal to save lives *and* souls through their humanitarian efforts. Again, such practices create tension in the humanitarian field. Samaritan Purse demonstrates the particular risks of this version of faith-based humanitarianism. Michelle Cottle argues that Samaritan Purse increased the danger of humanitarian relief efforts for fellow aid agencies in Muslim countries when they sought to enter Iraq in 2003. *Newsweek* reported that Christian humanitarian agencies that combine evangelism with aid efforts received a "boost… when the White House announced it would not interfere with proselytizing in Iraq" (Christenson 2003). To onlookers in the Arab world, this move raised the concern that "Operation Iraqi Freedom was, in fact, the opening salvo in a modern crusade against Islam" (Cottle 2003, p. 16).[5] Armstrong (2003) notes that due to the recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the war on terror, aid workers are increasingly the target of attacks and kidnappings. In Pakistan, for example, Christian agencies have endured a string of killings and kidnappings since 2001, and a Muslim gunman murdered one American nurse based on the belief that she was proselytizing. Highlighting government opposition to religious NGOs, Berger (2003, p. 35) writes that "In September 2000, Pakistan's religious and political parties and the clergy who head them led an organized religious campaign against NGOs, accusing them of being Western and Christian. In a similar revolt the Eritrean government shut down health clinics operated by the Presbyterian Church and stipulated that 'religious organizations may fund but not initiate development projects.'"

Increased Muslim resentment toward the West renders the combination of religion and humanitarianism a potentially volatile mix for aid workers and their humanitarian missions. And in some countries with a Muslim majority, conversion to Christianity is punishable by death under Shari'a law, or other punishment can be incurred (Van Biema 2003). Where faith-based agencies combine evangelistic outreach with humanitarian aid, not only may fellow aid agencies' operations and staff be more at risk, the lives of beneficiaries may also be in greater danger depending on the religious environment of the host country.[6] While it may be impossible to assess the degree to which Christian faith-based agencies actually

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[5] See also Van Biema (2003). Cottle also notes that, following the White House announcement, the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention decided to send food aid in boxes with Scripture references printed on the boxes. During the Gulf War, Samaritan Purse arranged for the distribution of Bibles in the Arabic language in "direct violation of Saudi law," which "flew in the face of an understanding between the US and Saudi governments to eschew proselytizing" (Cottle 2003, p. 17). Franklin Graham, the face and voice of Samaritan Purse, is also well known for his outspoken criticism of Islam as an evil religion.

[6] Cottle (2003, p. 18) notes that other humanitarian agencies "expressed concerns that the presence of Graham [the head of Samaritan Purse] and his group in post-war Iraq could ultimately make life harder for everyone from non-sectarian aid workers to the country's Christian minority to other evangelicals."

jeopardize humanitarian efforts in the field, the examples ultimately highlight the tension in humanitarianism over the role of faith-based agencies.

Another issue concerns whether contemporary humanitarianism has truly broken with its roots in nineteenth century colonialism and Christian missions—the sword of Western imperialism in one hand and the civilizing and saving power of the Bible in the other. One may argue that humanitarian agencies that incorporate Christian witness as an integral part of their mission and/or operations employ a thinly veiled form of religious imperialism by taking advantage of unfortunate situations of human suffering to spread the Christian message to a necessarily captive audience, even if acceptance of that message is not a prerequisite for aid. Although many faith-based agencies may not condone proselytism, agencies such as World Vision have an implicit goal of evangelism—the belief that more souls can be brought to Christ through the witness of caring for the needs of others than by merely preaching Christianity (Bornstein 2005). The significant presence of faith-based agencies in the humanitarian field thus gives some ground to critics, such as international legal scholar Chimni (2007), who purport that modern humanitarianism is merely a continuation of Western imperialism carried over from the colonial period. For all of these reasons and with the goal to clarify or dispel some of the tensions, it is particularly important to explore the connection between religious identity and Christian faith-based agencies.

How is one to distinguish the various tensions that may arise due to an agency's faith-based identity or practices in the field? Are all Christian faith-based agencies equally likely to create such tensions? These questions can only be answered by examining the various ways in which faith informs the operations of the agencies. As the taxonomy will demonstrate, the assumption that all faith-based agencies are alike is a false generalization that only muddies the vision that agencies and donors have of faith-based agencies and, in some cases, hinders collaboration to the detriment of humanitarian efforts.

Clarifying "Religious" and "Secular"

To construct a taxonomy of Christian faith-based agencies presumes that a fundamental distinction can be made between religious and secular agencies. The scholarship is by no means settled on this issue, however. This article recognizes that some faith-based agencies may be difficult to distinguish from secular agencies beyond their foundation in a particular religious tradition. While secular agencies are neither "specifically concerned with the nonphysical nature of the individual nor… claim guidance and motivation from religious and spiritual sources," as Berger (2003, p. 35) contends, faith-based agencies are not necessarily concerned with the spiritual condition of their beneficiaries either, or they may not act directly to address spiritual issues. Certainly faith-based organizations share many of the same goals and methods in providing relief and development. Nonetheless, the primary question must be *how* and *why* faith-based agencies diverge from their secular counterparts if and when they do so.

According to one set of literature on the topic, a number of scholars contend that it is primarily the mission of faith-based organizations that distinguishes them from secular agencies (Benedetti 2006; Berger 2003; Stoddard 2003). Indeed, Stoddard (2003, p. 27) argues that religious NGOs are not distinct from secular agencies in their operations but that their underlying vision or mission is informed by their religious beliefs; that is, they "combine religious values with secular goals." Similarly, Berger (2003, p. 19) notes that "although religious NGOs operate within the same legal and political frameworks as secular civil society, their mission and operations are guided by a concept of the divine and recognition of the sacred nature of human life." Instead of a "rights-based approach" or "reasoned origin of values," the work of religious NGOs assumes a spiritual significance (ibid.). Thus, as these scholars contend, the central distinction between faith-based and secular agencies is that faith-based identity may be more or less operationalized according to an agency's "purpose of mission" narrative.

Other scholars contend that faith-based agencies may be distinguished from secular agencies based on the degree to which religion informs various aspects of the agencies. Faith-based agencies, in this perspective, reflect secular agencies to a greater or lesser degree in the extent to which religion informs the structure, mission, and operations of the agencies. Accordingly, Berger (2003) refers to the degree or pervasiveness of an organization's religiosity. She notes that no organization is purely secular or religious and it depends on the level of analysis; the role of religion will be most significance when it directly informs an agency's operations. Recognizing the possible variation among faith-based agencies, Kniss and Campbell's (1997) study of 57 international faith-based humanitarian agencies found that the faith-based agencies are not distinct from secular agencies in the size and cost of their operations, but *evangelical* agencies do tend to be distinct. Evangelical humanitarian agencies were found to "support local initiatives in relief and development," but they are "in fact primarily church planting organizations who engage in relief and development as an ad hoc peripheral activity" (Kniss and Campbell 1997, p. 100). In contrast, faith-based ecumenical and mainline humanitarian agencies focus on relief and development as their primary goal and are more difficult to distinguish from secular agencies, because they employ "religious language that is more humanistic and broadly defined" (ibid.).[7]

These findings support an argument that the role of religion in faith-based humanitarian agencies should be considered based on an analysis of various organizational dynamics. The literature suggests that faith may inform more than simply the mission statement of an agency and can impact the way in which operations are ultimately conducted. Furthermore, based on case studies of four US human service agencies, Chambre (2001) argues that the influence of faith may

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[7] An ecumenical or parachurch organization is cross-denominational and grows out of a "common purpose and elements of common faith beyond the denomination" (Marty and Moore 2000, p. 79). World church councils are examples of ecumenical organizations, including the World Council of Churches. Also, World Vision, Habitat for Humanity, and Bread for the World represent parachurch or ecumenical humanitarian organizations that are not under the authority of any one denomination or church. For further discussion on the rapid growth in the number and type of parachurch organizations, see Willmer et al. (1998).

decline over time as agencies adapt to external conditions and resource imperatives. Chambre (2001, p. 452) finds that although the staff may be strongly motivated by their faith, it can "coexist with an organizational culture that might operate in an ecumenical and universalistic fashion." Thus, the reasons for and the significance of variations both between faith-based agencies and in relationship to "secular" agencies must be excavated by considering the influence of the religious traditions of Christian faith-based agencies from various angles.

Setting Out the Taxonomy

Four Dimensions of Analysis

Relatively few studies address the mechanisms through which faith translates into the work of faith-based humanitarian agencies. As Smith and Sosin (2001, p. 652) argue, "It is critical to carefully consider the way in which organizations are really tied to faith, and given this tie, how they function in the world."[8] A single continuum, however, is unlikely to capture the link between faith and an agency's structure and operations. For this reason, it is necessary to consider the role of faith on a multi-dimensional continuum as advocated by Ebaugh et al. (2006). Therefore, based on the scholarship reviewed here, the taxonomy will assess the influence of faith across four dimensions—the agency's mission, its ties to a religious base or authorities, its staff policies, and its base of donor support.

First and as previously noted, the mission of a faith-based agency can reflect varying degrees of religiosity. Using the language of a continuum, Benedetti (2006, p. 853) argues that "on one end… there are mission statements indistinguishable from those of secular NGOs" and "on the other end, some NGOs seek actively to spread the message of Christ." According to Berger (2003, p. 32), the mission is essential to understanding the services of a faith based agency, since "what renders these services religious (or spiritual) is the nature of the worldview on which they are based and on the motivation from which they spring." This article argues that where religion plays a greater role, it is more likely to be explicit in the express mission of an agency, as Kniss and Campbell (1997) also observe.

Second, the strength of the religious ties or affiliations of an agency will also likely influence its operations. Smith and Sosin (2001, p. 655) posit that the "religious culture dominates if agencies interact fully with congregations, other religious providers, and representatives of denominations." The religious orientation of the agency is more likely to hold sway when formally affiliated with a particular religious denomination (ibid.). Ebaugh et al. (2006, p. 2269) also contend that ties to a religious denomination shape the organizational structure of faith-based agencies and their services, noting that evangelical faith-based agencies, for example, tend to have "policies and practices [that] most strongly encourage religious expression" and place a "very strong value on proselytizing." Kniss and

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[8] For further discussion of the role of religious orientation in faith-based organizations, see Benedetti (2006), Berger (2003), Ebaugh et al. (2006), Ferris (2005), Jeavons (1994), and Smith and Sosin (2001).

Campbell (1997, p. 99) come to a similar conclusion, observing that, due to their "narrower constituency," evangelical agencies appear to be more relief-oriented than transdenominational or parachurch agencies. Therefore, depending on the degree of an agency's affiliation with a religious base or authorities, the influence of faith is likely to vary.

Third, the working culture or staff policies of faith-based agencies will also tend to reflect their degree of religiosity. Faith-based agency may draw on their religious support base not only for donor support, but also as a source of volunteers or employees (Ebaugh et al. 2006, p. 2266). As Chambre (2001, p. 436) notes, "Faith-based organizations mobilize committed groups of volunteers who are motivated by religious precepts and the belief that they are doing God's work." However, the faith-based identity of an agency does not necessarily mean that an agency will require a confession of faith on the part of staff (Chambre 2001; Jeavons 1994). Yet, Ferris (2005) notes that the religious identity of the staff is one of the factors that will tend to distinguish faith-based agency from secular ones, and Ebaugh et al. (2006, p. 2269) conclude that "those coalitions whose policies and practices demonstrate higher levels of staff religiosity also place a high value on proselytizing." Whether Christian humanitarian agencies require staff or volunteers to confirm their Christian faith or whether they do not distinguish based on religious beliefs reflects an agency's degree of religiosity and the likelihood that religious identity may impact operations.

Finally, studies highlight the constraints of donors on both religious and secular humanitarian agencies, particularly if they rely on governments for a large percentage of their funding (Cooley and Ron 2002). Agencies that reject government funds may face greater difficulty in providing services effectively, but agencies that accept such funds may struggle to maintain the values and goals of the agency (Eade and Ligteringen 2001; Minear and Weiss 1995). Consequently, Ebaugh et al. (2006, p. 2269) find a negative relationship between religiosity and government funding, or what Abigail Kuzma (2000, p. 39) refers to as a "mission creep" problem, "bending or altering the original goals of the program to secure state and federal contracts." As Smith and Sosin (2001, p. 654) point out, "the literature on large religious providers implies that services are fundamentally altered in a secular direction by the agencies' funding arrangements and the resulting asymmetrical dependencies with governments… and other secular entities." However, the evidence that government funding invariably alters or negatively impacts the goals and values of NGOs is far from conclusive, particularly in the case of faith-based agencies. Such agencies, in fact, have an advantage over secular agencies because they may appeal to a religious base for donor support. World Vision and other faith-based agencies rely less on government funds for this reason. "To maintain organizational independence, most [religious] NGOs are privately funded," writes Berger (2003, p. 28), "with the substantial portion of their financial resources coming from members in the form of donations, dues, or established tithing mechanisms within the religion itself." The donor base of Christian humanitarian agencies or their dependence upon government funds, therefore, is likely to reflect the influence of faith in the agencies.

As the current literature on the topic generally observes, the faith-based identity of an agency may affect it in varying strength across these four dimensions. However, it remains unclear *how* faith impacts where agencies are likely to fall along each continuum. What is the significance of the theological tradition from which the agencies derive? This article will now set out the taxonomy to understand these relationships.

Mobilizing the Taxonomy

When the Good Samaritan from the Biblical parable stopped to assist the suffering stranger along the road and ensured he was nursed back to health, the Samaritan represented according to Christ, the essence of the charity God demands his followers to show for humanity (*New International Version Bible*, Luke 10:30–37). Yet, while the parable of the Good Samaritan suggests a strong Christian ethic of love for one's neighbors, Biblical passages such as James 4:4—which states that "friendship with the world" is "hatred toward God"—may be interpreted by some to imply that Christians should withdraw from the generally sinful world or avoid participation in its institutions.[9] These two examples highlight how a particular theological approach may lead to a different understanding of a humanitarian ethic. In sum, three ideal-types of Christian faith-based humanitarianism stem from a closer analysis of Christian theology and as reflected in present-day humanitarian agencies. The article draws on the theological insights of Niebuhr's (1951) five "Christ and Culture" paradigms and transposes and expands them to the level of faith-based humanitarianism. This step and an analysis of case data lead to three types or classifications across the four dimensions—mission, affiliations, staff policies, and donor base (see Table 1).[10]

Accommodative–Humanitarianism: Niebuhr's Christ of Culture Model

Niebuhr's "Christ of Culture" model is most closely associated in Protestant Christianity with the liberal or mainline tradition. These are the modernist Christians to which the conservative denominations and fundamentalists react. Especially in the 1960s, this reactive tone spurred the rise of conservative protestant denominations in the US that opposed the conflation of secular culture and Christian

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[9] The entirety of the verse states: "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (James 4:4).

[10] See Annex 1 for a table laying out Niebuhr's five paradigms. Admittedly, Niebuhr's categories do not translate perfectly, as they were not intended to explain Christians' relationship to agencies of humanitarianism. The book itself was published in 1951 when faith-based humanitarian organizations were not nearly as prevalent. Nonetheless, Niebuhr's classifications serve as an important reference for developing the taxonomy, illuminating how Christian beliefs may translate into a humanitarian obligation to respond in particular ways to the suffering and needs of others in the world. Also, "culture," as Niebuhr employs the term, may be interchanged with "society." According to Niebuhr's (1951, p. 32) definition, culture refers to the realm of life that encompasses "language, habits, ideas, beliefs, customs, social organization, inherited artifacts, technical processes, and values" and it is "inextricably bound up with man's life in society; it is always social."

Table 1 Taxonomy of Christian faith-based humanitarianism

Taxonomy of Christian humanitarianism	Type of humanitarianism	Mission	Authority/affiliation	Working policies	Financial support	Example agencies
Accommodative humanitarianism (Christ of culture)	Blurs line between secular and religious nature of work	Absent strictly religious goals	Unlikely to be tied to a denomination or to justify work in religious language	Christian faith not required of staff	Funding not dependent upon religious sources	Christian Aid Heifer International
Synthesis humanitarianism (Christ above culture)	Attempts to balance Christian orientation and secular goals	Emphasize a just and peaceful world	More likely to be tied to a religious affiliation and justify work in explicitly religious language	More likely to have Christian working environment (staff culture)	Appeal for funding to Christian religious base and secular institutions	CRS CAFOD Church World Service American Friends Service Committee Lutheran World Services Mennonite Central Committee
Evangelistic humanitarianism (Christ transformer of culture) + (Christ and culture in paradox)	Humanitarianism for the sake of evangelism	Spiritual transformation	More likely to be religiously affiliated and justify work in explicitly religious language	Christian faith a likely requirement of the staff	Funding appeals primarily directed to Christian base and churches	Samaritan Purse World Vision International Mission Board of Southern Baptist Convention
Radical non-engagement (Christ against culture)	Humanitarian non-engagement; church missions as central goal	Focused mainly on christian fellowship; engages in religious social institutions for evangelism purposes	Tied to a denomination or religious authority	Christians within the denomination	Funding for missions from local denomination or denominational head body	N/A

life.[11] Historically, Niebuhr (1951, p. 85) identifies evidence of this tension dating back to Christian Gnostics of the Hellenistic period of early Christianity who blurred the division between Christian life and social beliefs or traditions. The Gnostics sought to understand Christ and his relationship to the world through the philosophies and science of their day (ibid. pp. 87–88). Elements of the writings of Locke, Kant, Jefferson, and the theologian Schleiermacher evidence the more contemporary reflections of the Christ of Culture tradition with their emphasis on reason and Christ as a moral standard.[12] Beyond these individuals, Niebuhr (1951, p. 94) writes that: "As the nineteenth century moved on… to Hegel, Emerson, and Ritschl, from the religion within the limits of reason to the religion of humanity, the Christ-of-culture theme was sounded over and over again in many variations, was denounced by cultural opponents of Christ and by radical Christians, and merged into other answers that sought to maintain the distinction between Christ and civilization while yet maintaining loyalty to both."

As Niebuhr (1951, p. 97) notes, Ritschle emphasized that Christians could honor Christ by serving society for the "sake of the common good, by faithfulness in one's social calling." One's social calling in this case is based on beliefs about the importance of living with Christian charity (Samuel and Sugden 1994, p. 17). Ritschls' reconciliation of Christ and culture laid the groundwork for the articulation of a social gospel by other prominent theologians since the nineteenth century, as well as the tension that would ensue among conservative and liberal Christians in the twentieth century.

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[11] In the twentieth century, denominations polarized into liberal and conservative theologies. Mainline Protestants most closely reflect the liberal camp and comprise American Baptist, Congregational, Disciples, Episcopal, Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian denominations (Williams 2002, pp. 355–356). Mainline Protestantism expanded for much of the twentieth century in the US until its decline began in the 1970s when a conservative backlash questioned the modernist theology (ibid. p. 477; see also Woodberry and Smith 1998, pp. 28–35). In opposition to the increasing pluralism and moral relativism of secular society, fundamentalists went down the path of separatism from society. Pentecostals and conservative evangelicals also tended toward withdrawal from secular society. Wilson and Janoski (1995, p. 138), citing Mock, note that within the Protestant tradition, "Liberal denominations… are associated with 'social activism' while 'the social identity of evangelicals is… oriented towards… saving souls.'" In the 1970s, a shift took place in the discourse of global evangelical leaders who began to question the emphasis on fostering the Christian life in opposition to secular society. Representative of this changing discourse, the International Congress on World Evangelism met in 1974 and produced the Lausanne Covenant that endorsed a social as well as evangelism mission. In 1978, a process began to outline a clear Biblical basis for Christian social responsibility, and, in 1983 the World Evangelical Association sponsored the Wheaton Conference with the primary goal to establish a theology of Christian missions focused on the transformation of all social life, not just the spiritual (Samuel and Sugden 1999a, pp. x–xi). Marty and Moore (2000, p. 154) contend that Christians are moving beyond the disputes between the modernist and fundamentalist camps and are more intent on addressing not only people's spiritual needs but also their physical well-being (see also Guinness 1999). In the compilation of essays on this topic in *Missions as Transformation*, Dempster (1999, p. 47) notes that the question of Christian social engagement is not entirely resolved, however, as "Church leaders are not yet sure-footed nor united theologically in justifying Christian social concern as part of the church's mission" in the fear that "promoting human material welfare may undermine… the church's evangelistic mandate." Nonetheless, in contemporary evangelicalism, the separation between the religious and the secular is no longer the dominant conviction. The shift in discourse away from a separatist Christianity coincides with the growth of Christian faith-based relief and development agencies (Barrow and Jennings 2001, p. 9).

[12] These individuals varied, however, in their allegiance to New Testament scripture and the Christian community.

What is the theology of the Christ of Culture viewpoint in relationship to society more specifically? The "cultural" Christian emphasizes Christ as a reformer whose life serves as the model for living the Christian life *in* the world. The world may be corrupt and sinful, but for this reason Christ is relevant to the world; he is a reformer who stands for a "peaceful, cooperative society achieved by moral training" (Niebuhr 1951, p. 92). The cultural Christian has little qualm with reason, scientific advances, or the tenets of natural law, as they represent human progress and achievements made possible by God's grace. Instead of shunning secular culture, therefore, Christians must serve Christ by participating in secular culture and in a language that it understands. The command to love one's neighbor necessitates "work in the moral communities of family and economic, national, and political life," and "only by engagement in civic work for the sake of the common good, by faithfulness in one's social calling, is it possible to be true to the example of Christ" (Niebuhr 1951, p. 97). Christians, therefore, need not be suspicious of social institutions and may serve in them to help better the world. The cultural Christian identifies Christ with "what men conceive to be their finest ideals, their noblest institutions, and their best philosophy" (ibid. p. 103). These are the bedrock beliefs of what it means to be a Christian of the Christ of Culture tradition.

Accommodative–Humanitarianism

The cultural Christianity informs a classification of faith based-humanitarianism that has religious roots, but its operations are not designed to fulfill a religious agenda. This Accommodative–Humanitarianism will tend to be more difficult to distinguish from secular humanitarian agencies. First, regarding its mission, the Accommodative–Humanitarian agency does not emphasize an explicitly faith-based mission. The mission statement will not have highly religious overtones, and its religious orientation is unlikely to have any bearing on both the agency's structure and operations. Kniss and Campbell (1997, p. 101) find that ecumenical and/or mainline organizations are more likely to fit this classification. For example, "Ecumenical and mainline organizations use 'faith' in a more humanistic manner, often referring to the faith of the organization's 'target' population (e.g., 'founded on the belief in the brotherhood and sisterhood of all of humankind, and in the faith and goodwill that people have toward each other, regardless of their religious creed')" (ibid. p. 100). Also, instead of a mission of ministry, these ecumenical and mainline agencies are centered on assistance as their chief end. While the agency may articulate a goal to serve and meet the needs of those who are suffering, the agency will likely obfuscate the uniquely Christian nature of its operations. Consequently, religious principles are a vaguely articulated motivation for the agency's service or may simply inform its original founding, but the agency does not mandate the incorporation of religious goals into its operations, particularly not proselytizing.

Second, regarding the source of authority or legitimacy for the Accommodative–Humanitarianism, such agencies are less likely to be tightly linked to a religious denomination. Instead of deriving their legitimacy from a denominational authority, they are more likely to legitimize their work based on the effectiveness of the

agency in providing its services. Accordingly, this implies that "when agencies achieve autonomy from the denomination, they are freed from religious authority and garner a larger share of their legitimacy bureaucratically for the services they deliver… not the values they pursue" (Smith and Sosin 2001, p. 655).

Third, the nature of donor support will also reflect Accommodative–Humanitarianism. Since this classification of faith-based agency is less likely to be tied to one particular religious denomination, the agency is more likely to appeal across the social and institutional spectrum for support and is not limited in its appeals to a particular subset of Christians. Similar to secular organizations, the cultural Christian agency must determine how much government funding it may accept without compromising the goals of the organization.

Fourth, while the faith-based nature of the agency may attract persons with a similar Christian conviction and motivation for humanitarian work, the cultural Christian agency will not require employees to sign or agree with a basic statement of faith that emphasizes their Christian commitment. The primary qualification is the professionalism of the staff.

The Case of Christian Aid

Christian Aid is an example of an agency of the Accommodative–Humanitarian type. Following the Second World War, British and Irish church leaders founded the agency.[13] Apart from "Christian" in its name and its connection to churches, the faith-based nature of the agency is vaguely a factor, if at all. Indeed, the aim or mission of the agency is devoid of religious language and states, "Inspired by our values of hope, justice, courage and honesty, we are committed to seeing a just world. Now. Not just in the future. We believe in life before death" (Christian Aid, "Our aim"). Christian Aid does not reference a religious motivation for its humanitarianism and rejects evangelism in any aspects of its operations. As a humanitarian agency with Christian roots, the actual mission and work of the organization lacks a religious orientation.

As an ecumenical agency, Christian Aid is not tied to any one religious denomination. Christian Aid is sponsored by 41 churches in Britain and Ireland, and these churches appoint the agency's board of trustees. The sponsoring churches do play a role in the authority structure of the agency as noted above, but Christian Aid legitimizes its work in purely secular terms. That is, the agency does not use language that justifies or legitimizes its programs or mission by appealing to a religious motivation or ethic. Instead, Christian Aid emphasizes that its projects are evaluated based on standards of humanitarian conduct, stating, "All our work, and the work of our partners, is governed by the Red Cross/Red Crescent Code of Conduct. This code, to which we are signatories, commits us to giving aid on the basis of need alone, regardless of ethnicity, religion or nationality. We are independent of governments and institutions, impartial in the allocation of aid and

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[13] Christian Aid is currently working in nearly 50 countries in partnership with 600 overseas organizations (Christian Aid, "About us: Our history").

relief, and neutral in conflict as a humanitarian agency" (Christian Aid, "What we do: On the ground").

Christian Aid also conforms to the Accommodative–Humanitarianism classification, as it appeals to the general public to support its programs and also accepts government support. However, the agency restricts government funding to 30% of its total income—not to compromise its religious goals—but in order to maintain independence (Christian Aid, "Where it all comes from"). With respect to staff hiring policies, Christian Aid does not require staff to adhere to Christian beliefs or sign a statement to that effect. Like any secular aid agency, the professionalism and job-related qualifications are the most important consideration. The board of directors may come from a faith background since the board is nominated by the agency's sponsoring churches, but this is by no means clear.

In summary, the Accommodative–Humanitarian agency is the most secular-oriented of faith-based humanitarian agencies. Extending the theme of Niebuhr's Christ of Culture paradigm, the Accommodative–Humanitarian agency blurs the lines between the secular and religious—whether its work is of Christ or of culture—and embraces the tools and culture of secular institutions in its service. Regarding the structure of such agencies, Smith and Sosin (2001, p. 652) note the following: "Indeed, this seems to confirm a more traditional stream of scholarship that suggests many large, religiously tied agencies are heavily secularized and quite like other non-profit providers. The agencies allegedly rely on professional staff, select clients universally, and refrain from mandating participation in religious activities or otherwise expressing their faith."

Christian Aid is only one example of this classification, and other fellow Accommodative–Humanitarian agencies may vary in the degree to which their mission, for example, lacks explicitly religious motivations. Yet, as Benedetti's argues, Secular–Christian NGOs in general tend to have "low religious pervasiveness in the membership and the mission" and will be similar to secular NGOs in their language and operations; this does not mean, however, that they will not employ "Christianity as reference point and ideology" in some limited sense (Benedetti 2006, p. 853). Thus, within the Accommodative–Humanitarian tradition, there may be some variation across the four dimensions, but, overall, they will tend to resemble secular agencies more closely than the following classifications of this taxonomy.

Synthesis–Humanitarianism: Niebuhr's Christ above Culture Model

Niebuhr's Christ above Culture (1951, p. 117) or "synthesist" paradigm refers to the "church of the center" or the "great majority movement in Christianity, which… has refused to take either the position of the anticultural radicals or that of the accommodators of Christ to Culture." The religious traditions of Roman and Anglican Catholicism stem from this tradition, as well as Protestantism to some degree. Niebuhr (1951, p. 118) identifies Clement of Alexandria as the first theologian to articulate this line of Christian thought in the second century. However, Thomas Aquinas, a thirteenth century church figure, is "probably the greatest of all the synthesists in Christian history," as he exemplifies a "Christianity

that has achieved or accepted full social responsibility for all the great institutions."[14] Accordingly, a Christian must live with high moral standards similar to Christ's example, but God extends his grace and love to humans by conveying it "through the great social institutions of family, state, and church" (ibid. p. 134). God's law and the rules of society may coincide, because "culture is the work of God-given reason in God-given nature" (ibid. p. 135). In this manner, social institutions and their construction of moral standards help order society.[15]

Reflecting on the goodness of the created order, Christians of this theological tradition do not maintain an exclusive Christianity. Niebuhr (1951, p. 120) notes that the synthesist "affirms both Christ and culture," but does not make Christ relative to the "views of the time" as is the tendency of the cultural Christianity. Christian engagement in social institutions, therefore, is essential in the synthesist tradition. The rules of society reflect divine inspiration and can be realized through just social institutions.[16] The synthesist tradition, however, tries to maintain a more distinctive demarcation between what is of Christ and what is of the social order, which the cultural Christian tends to blur. In contrast to the cultural Christian who "makes common cause with the nonbeliever to an extent which deprives him of distinctively Christian principles," the synthesist "seems to provide for willing and intelligent co-operation of Christians with nonbelievers in carrying on the work of the world while yet maintaining the distinctiveness of Christian faith and life" (ibid. pp. 143–144). Consequently, there is room for "some sort of reconciliation between Christ and culture without denial of either" (ibid. p. 141). The critical distinction of the Christ above Culture paradigm is that Christians maintain their distinctiveness, which has important implications for the faith-based humanitarianism stemming from this religious tradition.

Synthesis–Humanitarianism

The "Synthesis–Humanitarianism" is a rational outflow of the Christ above Culture tradition, because it values the role of social institutions in constructing a just and peaceful social order and believes there need be no barrier between believers and non-believers where the goal of service is the same. However, the important issue for the Synthesis–Humanitarianism is maintaining its distinctive Christian character. The Accommodative–Humanitarianism, in contrast, clearly blurs this distinction, and, at the other extreme, humanitarianism focused mainly on bringing spiritual transformation overlooks the inherent value of non-spiritualized rational institutions to create a just social order that brings glory to God.

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[14] Aquinas is the standard bearer of the Catholic and Anglican Christian thinking on Christianity's relationship to society.

[15] The synthesist tradition is extremely influential in the "arts, sciences, philosophy, law, government, education, and economic institutions" of Western society and reflects the theology of the Roman Catholic Church (Niebuhr 1951, p. 144).

[16] Christians serve in these social institutions to assist in the "ordering of the temporal life; since reason sometimes falls short of its possible performance and requires the gracious assistance of revelation, and since it cannot reach the inner springs and motives of action" (Niebuhr 1951, pp. 135–136).

Although the work of Synthesis–Humanitarian agencies may largely reflect the operations of any secular agency, this classification maintains a clear religious orientation as the primary motivation for its mission. Christ must be central to any perceived solution. However, the Synthesis–Humanitarianism is not a cover for direct evangelism. Providing humanitarian assistance is the witness to God's love. Acceptance of a religious message is not a prerequisite for assistance, but witnessing to God's love through deeds is central to the mission of the Synthesis–Humanitarian agency. This witness, as proclaimed in a 1994 gathering of Christians in Malaysia, seeks to "demonstrate visibly the love and unity of the worldwide body of Christ so that the world may believe that Jesus came from the Father" (Samuel and Sugden 1994, p. 18).

Second, in contrast to the Accommodative–Humanitarianism, the Synthesis–Humanitarian agency will tend to have closer ties to a particular religious authority or denomination. Because the Synthesis–Humanitarianism is committed in its theological roots to a distinctive Christ-centered ethic of social engagement, the religious ties of such agencies are likely to be important as oversight bodies that ensure the agencies accord with this vision. An agency may move away from these ties over time, but in so doing it is more likely to reflect an Accommodative–Humanitarian classification across all four dimensions.

Third, the Synthesis–Humanitarian agency is more likely than the Accommodative–Humanitarianism to attract staff that views their work as a Christian vocation, an occupation within which one may live by and honor Christian beliefs or convictions. Since the Christian culture is central to maintaining the distinctiveness of Synthesis–Humanitarianism, Christian staff will be predominant and the agency may require the staff to affirm their agreement with the Christian mission of the agency. The working culture of the Synthesis–Humanitarianism is, therefore, distinct from secular agencies and from the tendency of Accommodative–Humanitarianism to blur the secular and religious nature of Christian service. As a representative of Mercy Corps noted at a US Institute of Peace meeting on faith-based humanitarianism, Christians who "go into international relief and development work need to see it as a kind of ministry, not with an evangelizing mission, but as fulfilling the spiritual purposes of one's faith" (United States Institute of Peace 2001). This statement captures the vision of the Synthesis–Humanitarianism staff policies.

Fourth, the Synthesis–Humanitarianism agency, unlike the Accommodative–Humanitarian agency, is more likely to appeal to a religious base for donor support, because its faith-based identity is more explicit and more likely to appeal to donors concerned about a Christ-centered mission in humanitarian work. Nonetheless, since the theological roots of a Synthesis–Humanitarianism engages in secular society and willingly embraces its means or "tools" to serve others, such agencies will also rely on non-religious funding sources as well. Also, they will be less likely than the Evangelistic–Humanitarianism to face obstacles to such funding.

The Cases of Catholic Agency for Overseas Development and Catholic Relief Services

Considering the central theological position of synthesist theology in the church and western society, there are a number of faith-based agencies that reflect the mission

of a Synthesis–Humanitarianism. Agencies associated with the Catholic Church are particularly illustrative, such as the Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD) and Catholic Relief Services (CRS). Founded by the Catholic Bishops of the United States in 1943, CRS works in over 100 countries with a mission "to assist impoverished and disadvantaged people overseas… to promote the sacredness of human life and the dignity of the human person" (CRS, "About Catholic Relief Services). This mission stems from Catholic Social Teaching and the desire to live out the teachings of Christ in the world (CRS, "How we serve"). The agency's "fundamental motivating force in all activities… is the Gospel of Jesus Christ as it pertains to the alleviation of human suffering, the development of people and the fostering of charity and justice" (CRS, "About Catholic Relief Services"). However, the agency's emphasis on meeting the needs of the poor and promoting human dignity does reject evangelism or proselytism.[17] Change is brought about by honoring the Christian conviction to work in solidarity with the poor.

Both CAFOD and CRS refer to the Catholic Church and its teachings for their authority.[18] The governance of the organization is tied to the Catholic Church and bishops who comprise the administrative board, which is "selected by the National Council of Catholic Bishops and is staffed by men and women committed to the Catholic church's apostolate of helping those in need" (CRS, "About Catholic Relief Services"). The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), also a Synthesis–Humanitarian agency, is tied to the Mennonite church, and its "provincial and regional MCC offices are comprised of representatives of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ conferences in Canada and the United States" (MCC, "Frequently asked questions"). In this aspect, the distinctly Christ centered roots or rationale of these organizations are maintained through the religious oversight or administration of the organizations.

Regarding staff policies, CRS does not require Catholic faith of its employees, but the volunteer program is designed for lay Catholics in the US to be able to honor their "faith call" by living and working "in solidarity with… sisters and brothers around the world" (CRS, "Catholic Relief Services Volunteer Program"). Overall, a Christian working culture is more likely to be a pervasive feature of the Synthesis–Humanitarian agency. Volunteers for the Mennonite Central Community, for example, must be "committed Christians" and "active members of a local church and accept the biblical teaching of nonviolence" (MCC, "Frequently asked questions").

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[17] Characteristic of the Accommodative– or Synthesis–Humanitarianism, some Christian faith-based agencies attempt to smooth out tensions through their faith-based identity but without an evangelistic agenda. This approach embraces interfaith dialogue, welcoming collaboration with secular agencies and those of non-Christian religions. Lutheran World Service takes this line, hoping to ameliorate and not create tensions in the global context of a rise in interfaith conflicts. The agency notes, "Throughout its history, World Service has nurtured close and fruitful relationships with people and communities of other faiths, including Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists, and with non-secular governments. This network of strong historical ties based on mutual respect and appreciation is invaluable when conflicts and tensions arise. Interfaith dialogue remains high on the agenda as increased knowledge of 'the other' promotes peaceful relations" (Lutheran World Federation, "Global strategy 2007–2012").

[18] CAFOD describes itself as the "official overseas development and relief agency of the Catholic Church of England and Wales"; see CAFOD, "About: Vision and values," www.cafod.org.uk

In line with a Synthesis–Humanitarian classification, CRS does not appeal primarily to a religious donor base. In 2006, CRS received approximately 36% of its total revenue in the form of US government grants, which varies based on factors such as the number of emergencies each year (CRS, *2006 Annual Report*). Like any religious or secular agency, however, the Synthesis–Humanitarian agency may restrict its reliance on government funding to also avoid the possibility of compromising the agency's distinctive faith-informed mission.

To summarize, there is a distinct fusion of Christianity and humanitarian service in the Synthesis–Humanitarianism. In contrast to Accommodative–Humanitarian agencies for which Christian faith is vaguely associated with their humanitarianism, the Synthesis–Humanitarianism is clearly motivated by its Christian doctrinal roots, and, while the operations may be difficult to distinguish from secular agencies, their mission aims to convey God's love and concern for humanity through their deeds or operations.[19] The mission and working culture are the realms in which the agency clearly maintains the Christian faith and life of the organization in accordance with the theological underpinnings of the Christ above Culture theological foundation.

Evangelistic–Humanitarianism: Niebuhr's Christ the Transformer of Culture plus Christ and Culture in Paradox Models

The Christ the Transformer of Culture and the Christ and Culture in Paradox traditions emerge from two distinct Christian theologies that Niebuhr delineates. However, in their relationship to faith-based humanitarianism, this article merges the traditions. In their application to the study of Christian faith and humanitarianism, they together inform a singular third form of humanitarianism: Evangelistic–Humanitarianism.

The prominent thinkers of the Christ the Transformer of Culture tradition belong to the "great central tradition of the church," who, while they distinguish between "God's work in Christ and man's work in culture… do not take the road of exclusive Christianity into isolation from civilization, or reject its institutions with Tolstoyan bitterness" (Niebuhr 1951, p. 190). However, humanity's essential problem, according to this "conversionist" tradition, is that its good nature is inherently corrupted by sin, which hampers efforts to create a good society. The possibility of society's "conversion" or renewal lies in the belief that God interacts with humans in history (ibid. pp. 194–195). The Biblical Gospel of John informs the core element of this theological approach—that spiritual transformation through Christ is the antidote to society's ills. In contrast to the cultural Christian theology, John's gospel does not conflate culture with Christ. Augustine's fourth century writings, as well as his life, also exemplify this model. "Christ is the transformer of culture for Augustine," notes Niebuhr (1951, p. 209), "in the sense that [Christ] redirects, reinvigorates, and regenerates that life of man, expressed in all human works, which in present actuality is the perverted and corrupted exercise of a fundamentally good nature." Reflections of Calvin, Luther, Jonathan Edwards, and

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[19] See, e.g., Stoddard (2003) who contends that World Vision's programs in Afghanistan are "indistinguishable from those of secular agencies."

the theologian F. D. Maurice in the nineteenth century are also part of this theological tradition. The tone of the conversionists is, therefore, clearly positive in relationship to creation and reflects a hopefulness that society can be restored through a spiritual transformation that flows from active Christian witness (ibid. p. 191).[20]

In the second paradigm—Christ and Culture in Paradox—both the apostle Paul's writings in the New Testament and Martin Luther's writings represent this "dualist" theological tradition. The dualist Christian emphasizes to a greater degree than the other traditions the pervasiveness of sin in the world, which thoroughly corrupts not only secular society, but also the society of Christians. Instead of the optimistic and permissive belief that Christians can contribute to the creation of a godly society by engaging in its secular institutions and work, the apostle Paul's theology informs a view of Christian and secular establishments as useful merely in their ability to "restrain and expose sin rather than to guide men to divine righteousness" (Niebuhr 1951, p. 165). Only acceptance of Christ's redemptive work on the cross can bring spiritual and, subsequently, social transformation. In essence, Christians live out their faith in a social setting and may work in or support its institutions, but these institutions cannot bring the spiritual transformation that can ultimately stem the destructiveness of sin. Rather than emphasizing the value in reason and law like the synthesists, the dualist views the "whole edifice of culture as cracked and madly askew; the work of self-contradicting builders, erecting towers that aspire to heaven on a fault in the earth's crust" (ibid. pp. 155–156).

There is a dispassionate relationship between the dualist and secular society. Dualists tend toward a conservative Christianity that is largely concerned with the spiritual condition of the church, a focus on eternal rather than temporal goals. Niebuhr (1951, p. 188) notes that any contribution of dualist Christians to improving society is unintentional. Writing in the sixteenth century, Luther clearly articulates these dualist convictions. Through individual faith in Christ, one's life is "renewed" and Christ "cleanses the springs of action; he creates and recreates the ultimate community in which all action takes place" (ibid. p. 174). God does not interact with humanity or work through its cultural institutions in the way envisioned by the synthesist or conversionist traditions. Christ, in Luther's dualism, does not directly create the rules for life in secular culture; instead, Luther affirmed "life in culture as the sphere in which Christ could and ought to be followed; and… that the rules to be followed in the cultural life were independent of Christian or church law" (ibid. p. 174). Thus, the Christ and Culture in Paradox Christianity has a more difficult time reconciling Christianity with secular society than do the other paradigms.

The dualist and conversionist Christian traditions merge into a singular ethic of Christian humanitarianism. They both hold that spiritual transformation is the only force that can truly create a godly or just society. The dualist beliefs feed into the

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[20] The social institutions "may all become both the beneficiaries of the conversion of man's love and the instruments of that new love of God that rejoices in his whole creation and serves all his creatures" (Niebuhr 1951, p. 215). Furthermore, Christian service is not limited to the fellowship of believers, as "everything, and not least the political life, is subject to the great conversion" (ibid.). Indeed, Christian vocation in social institutions can serve not only to constrain evil but to transform the world and bring glory to God.

justification for the conversionist ethic of Christian service—that the most important work of Christians is to spread the Christian gospel in order to bring the spiritual transformation that society needs and that advances the kingdom of God on earth. In his reflection on a Christian mission of transformation, Samuel (1999, p. 229) exemplifies this view, stating, "How can you have social change without relation to Christ? Wherever social change is attempted it cannot be done without relation to God in Christ—without reference to and relation to what Christ offers to people. Thus one component of transformation is the integral relation of evangelism to social action and not to allow either evangelism or social action to stand on their own."

This transformation, Krapohl and Lippy (1999, p. 20) note, leads people to adhere to the morals or values of the Bible, which will improve the world. This theology of Christian service is most likely to resonate among evangelical or conservative Christians, and, as Krapohl and Lippy (1999, pp. 131–140) argue, it was the driving force behind Protestant mission in the nineteenth century and lies "at the heart of most evangelical political and social action prior to the close of the twentieth century." They further note that modern American evangelicals have looked askance at virtually every element of popular culture. But they have also demonstrated tremendous elasticity in being able to use the media of popular culture for evangelical purpose and transform what would otherwise be regarded as sinful and evil into vehicles to promote evangelical truth and cultivate deeper commitment to the life of faith (ibid. p. 187).

A faith-based humanitarian stemming from the dualist and conversionist Christian traditions sounds almost counter-intuitive, since dualists passively accept the value of social institutions and both traditions focus more on the spiritual value of Christian life and the fellowship of Christians. Nonetheless, as this article argues, these two models together inform a third variant of faith-based humanitarianism that one may define as an Evangelistic–Humanitarianism.

Evangelistic–Humanitarianism

The primary mission of the Evangelistic–Humanitarianism is to meet the needs of and expand the fellowship of Christian believers. The language of the mission will, therefore, explicitly reflect these agencies' Christ-centered motivation with no danger of blurring the line between a secular and Christian ethic of service. By combining explicit Christian witness in the operations of humanitarianism, the gospel of Christ can bring the spiritual transformation that is at the root of the world's problems. The Evangelistic–Humanitarianism most closely reflects Berger's (2003, p. 35) general assertion that religious NGOs "while at times similar in appearance to those of nonreligious NGOs, concern themselves with the spiritual well-being of the individual and of society."

Subsequently, the mission of such agencies places a clear emphasis on providing service that is motivated by and witnesses to God's love for humanity. That is, their mission is essentially one of evangelism and will often provide support to and through local churches and missionaries. The agency may be engaged in supporting relief or development projects not as their primary goal, but, rather, as part of an

express purpose of spreading the gospel message. Success, therefore, will be framed in terms of the agencies effectiveness in spreading the gospel through its humanitarian operations. In contrast to the Accommodative– or Synthesis–Humanitarianism, the Evangelistic type essentially only values the spiritual dimension and its "eternal" significance. Kniss and Campbell (1997, p. 101) note that such agencies tend be those associated with the evangelical faith tradition and that they provide relief and development assistance largely with the goal of helping to extend the church, build up the community of Christians globally, and serve the spiritual needs of humanity.

Second, considering the theological roots of Evangelistic–Humanitarianism, agencies of this type have strong ties to religious denominations or authorities. The ties reflect the strength of the fully Christ-centered mission of the agencies with the goal to expand the church of Christ through a narrative of spiritual transformation as an accompaniment to relief or development assistance. In some cases, the goal of establishing churches may be the primary aim of such agencies (Kniss and Campbell 1997, p. 100). Such an emphasis is clearly beyond the acceptable bounds of the Accommodative– or Synthesis–Humanitarianism.

Third, in view of the mission of Evangelistic–Humanitarian agencies, the staff policies are likely to place a strong emphasis on the personal faith commitment of staff. Indeed, not only will the staff be required to share the Christian convictions of the organization, employment may be contingent upon signing a statement of Christian faith. Furthermore, in light of the ties of such agencies, staff is more likely to derive from a similar denomination or faith-tradition than in the other classifications.

Fourth, since the primary goal of the Evangelistic–Humanitarianism is to "save the lost," the donor support of a faith base is essential. Government funding is unlikely to be a tenable objective or may be viewed as a constraint on the religious mission of the agency. As Chambre (2001, p. 452) notes, it is more "difficult for them to receive public funds since their 'services' inevitably include transmitting religious values, efforts that might be deemed to be proselytizing." For example, Bornstein (2005, p. 49) notes that the Zimbabwe Council of Churches had difficulty obtaining funding, because the donors did not want to finance evangelism at the same time as development projects. Due to the goals of the Evangelistic–Humanitarianism and the ties to religious denominations, the agencies will largely depend upon individual donors and appeal to the Christian community for support.

The Case of Samaritan Purse

Samaritan Purse serves as a particularly apt example of an Evangelistic–Humanitarian agency, and its name draws on the Biblical parable of the Good Samaritan. Samaritan Purse describes itself as a "nondenominational evangelical Christian organization" with the mission to offer "spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world" (Samaritan Purse, "Who we are: About us"). The agency began operations in 1970 and aims to "meet needs of people who are victims

of war, poverty, natural disasters, disease, and famine with the purpose of sharing God's love through His Son, Jesus Christ" (ibid.). As this statement illustrates, the central mission of the agency is to witness for Christ. Humanitarian service opens the door to its evangelistic goal, which is "at the heart" of Samaritan Purse ("Relief & Development: Evangelism"). Concurrently, Samaritan Purse's "most important mission… [is] to provide spiritual help by proclaiming the Good news of Jesus Christ" (ibid.). Indeed, the agency states that in providing "food, medicine, and other assistance in the Name of Jesus Christ," the service "earns [the agency] a hearing for the Gospel, the Good News of eternal life through Jesus Christ" (Samaritan Purse, "Who we are").

Samaritan Purse works on behalf of and through churches around the world and also assists missionaries to spread the Christian gospel through humanitarian operations.

Considering its religious ties, Samaritan Purse, although non-denominational, places itself within the evangelical Christian tradition. The agency's joint evangelism/humanitarianism justifies its mission based on references to Biblical scriptures and the Biblical command to preach the gospel in the whole world and care for the suffering. Consequently, the degree of these ties is reflected in Samaritan Purse's reply to criticisms of its version of humanitarianism. In a *New Republic* article (Cottle 2003, p. 17) on the dangers of Samaritan Purse entering Iraq in 2003, Franklin Graham, the head of the agency, states, "we realize we're in an Arab country and we just can't go out and preach"; nonetheless, he argues, "I believe as we work God will always give us opportunities to tell others about his Son… We are there to reach out to love them and to save them, and as a Christian I do this in the name of Jesus Christ." Graham echoes the reply of the apostles in the New Testament book of Acts when they were brought before the Sanhedrin for disobeying the order to discontinue preaching about Christ: "We must obey God rather than men!" (*New International Version Bible*, Acts 5:29).

Evangelistic–Humanitarianism requires active Christian witness even in the face of opposition or risks. This is a theology that draws on multiple Biblical references to the criticism, opposition, and even persecution that Christians will face because of their faith and their witness. Therefore, opposition to the gospel and even persecution or suffering for being a Christian should be counted as joy, since those who accept Christ have eternal hope with salvation through Jesus Christ. Accordingly, the *New Republic* asserts that "Graham, like many evangelical leaders, regards criticism of his proselytizing and aggressive sectarianism as a badge of honor" (Cottle 2003, p. 16). Thus, this response represents the most theologically rooted justification of Evangelistic–Humanitarianism.

Unsurprisingly, to be considered for employment, Samaritan Purse requires employees to confirm their Christian faith by signing a statement of faith. Staff must have the capacity to not only respond to the physical needs of the suffering, but also their spiritual needs. The Christian message is considered integral to the success of the relief and development projects. An advocate of this Evangelistic–Humanitarianism, Bradshaw argues that, for the success of aid projects where "Christian encounter with people of other religions," the aid workers should help "empower

them to live in the freedom of Christ" (Bradshaw 2002, p. 131). Aid workers should, therefore, engage the community in dialogue with the Christian gospel because it "gives people the freedom as well as the power to submit to the sovereignty of God, so that they can pray for rain, experiment with drought-resistant crops, develop another economic base, and find food relief, among other things" (ibid.). Thus, an Evangelistic–Humanitarianism necessitates staff committed to the Christian convictions of such agencies.

Due to the particular narrative of faith that informs the humanitarianism of agencies like Samaritan Purse, they are less likely to be dependent upon government grants that may limit their mobility in the pursuit of both ministry and aid delivery. Instead, such agencies are more likely to rely on the donors who are attracted by the mission of the agencies. Although donor information is difficult to obtain from organizations, Samaritan Purse notes that it receives an "overwhelming majority of... contribution income from individuals, churches, and organizations"; when the agency does receive an occasional US government grant, they have "very strict requirements how the grant can be used" and must "adhere to those restrictions and any financial reporting required."[21]

Overall, Evangelistic–Humanitarianism is quite distinct from the Accommodative–Humanitarianism and Synthesis–Humanitarianism. Samaritan Purse is one example of this classification. Some of the Evangelistic–Humanitarian agencies, however, may to a greater or lesser degree engage in humanitarianism to achieve their mission. For example, Kniss and Campbell (1997, p. 100) note that some faith-based international relief and development agencies "are in fact primarily church planting organizations who engage in relief and development as an ad hoc peripheral activity" and are "involved in relief and development only minimally and indirectly as part of their local church activity." Others, like Samaritan Purse, may have rather extensive humanitarian projects. Nonetheless, the common denominator is the joint ministry-humanitarianism of such agencies.

World Vision: A Case of Evangelistic–Humanitarianism?

Before concluding this section on the taxonomy, it is necessary to note that each dimension of the taxonomy is not necessarily all-encompassing but provides a general framework for understanding how the foundational theology of faith-based organizations informs their humanitarianism. One organization that is less easy to place, for example, is World Vision, one of the largest international humanitarian agencies. Nonetheless, while the agency does not mirror Samaritan Purse in its explicit emphasis on evangelism first and humanitarianism second, World Vision reflects more closely the Evangelistic–Humanitarianism than the Synthesis–Humanitarianism.

First, the agency's Christian roots explicitly inspire its mission. The agency's goal is to "follow our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in working with the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice and bear witness to the

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[21] Darren Mullenix, Samaritan Purse, personal communication, 19 January 2009.

good news of the kingdom of God" (World Vision International, "Who we are"). World Vision's focus on "transformational development" clearly recognizes an element of spiritual transformation in which God is essential to successful relief and development efforts. While the agency's policy clearly disavows proselytism, the freedom of aid workers to share their faith when asked the reason for their work blurs the line.[22] Also, a key "Domains of Change" target in World Vision's transformational development mission, Justin Byworth notes, is to seek transformed relationships, without which meaningful and sustainable change cannot take place. The scope of this change includes "restored relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ" and "enhanced relationship with God" for the poor, donors, and all involved in the development process (Byworth 2003, p. 102).

Mirroring the transformation theology of the conversionist theology within Evangelistic–Humanitarianism, World vision "engages in transformational development programmes accepting that transformation is a continuous process of holistic change brought about by God" and that "people need to be free to discover God's work among them for themselves" (ibid. p. 103). In this sense, Christ is at the center of World Vision's transformation focus. Further research is required to explore how this goal is translated in aid work and whether it is distinguishable from evangelism. Nonetheless, the line between "intentional Christian witness" and World Vision's policy against proselytism is unclear and likely depends on the aid workers and the particular country program of World Vision in question.[23] Regarding the agency's religious affiliation, as an ecumenical or trans-denominational agency, World Vision is not governed by an established Church. However, the agency has "Protestant leanings," notes Stoddard (2003, p. 27). In its call to "serve the neediest people of the earth; to relieve their suffering and to promote the transformation of their wellbeing," World Vision, as stated in its Core Values, "seek[s] to follow Jesus." The faith-based ties of the agency, therefore, are important to the mission of the agency.

In the case of World Vision's staff dynamics, the agency attracts Christians to its staff and in the United States screens its candidates for Christian commitment. The agency's website notes that it has "diverse opportunities for qualified and committed Christian professionals who are willing to share the life, light, and hope of Christ" (World Vision, "Frequently asked questions"). However, the agency is also open to individuals of any religious or non-religious background in

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[22] World Vision states that: "The organisation does not coerce nor demand that people hear any religious message or convert to Christianity before, during or after receiving assistance. Educational activities based on Christian values are included in World Vision projects if appropriate and desired by the community. However, World Vision respects the religious beliefs and practices in countries where it operates, and seeks mutual understanding with people of all faiths... Our focus is to respond to human need, and our compassion and professionalism reflect our faith"; see "Frequently asked questions," www.wvi.org

[23] Linda Tripp, the vice-president of World Vision, during a 2003 interview (Armstrong 2003). Trip couched her justification of the faith witness of aid workers in the language of human rights. Although World Vision does not condone proselytism, Trip argued that World Vision aid workers have the "right" to discuss their faith.

some aspects of its operations (Lindenberg and Bryant 2001, p. 35). For example, in World Vision's field office in Afghanistan, Stoddard (2003, p. 27) notes that the organization's staff is primarily composed of Muslims. In describing the staff environment of World Vision, Bornstein (2005, p. 46) observes that Christian faith is incorporated in prayer and devotional sessions and shapes not only how staff in the offices relate to one another and interpret their mission, but the strength or evidence of their faith is also part of their work performance evaluation. These policies are more reflective of an Evangelistic–Humanitarianism.

World Vision, because of its religious roots and ecumenical tradition, may also appeal for support from Christians across denominational lines, as well as to the general public. However, the agency does not allow government funds to comprise more than 20% of its budget (Stoddard 2003, p. 29). As one of the largest humanitarian agencies and with the largest overall revenue, World Vision serves as an example of a faith-based organization that can carry out its mission with limited reliance on government funding (Lindenberg and Bryant 2001, p. 35).

It is primarily World Vision's emphasis on a Christ-centered method of transformational development that renders the agency nearer the theology of Evangelistic–Humanitarianism. This does not imply that World Vision closely mirrors the mission and operations of agencies such as Samaritan Purse, but that World Vision stems from similar theological roots and understanding of the relationship between God and the world.

Conclusion

The taxonomy in this article provides insight into how variations in the theological roots of Christian humanitarian agencies can lead to divergent forms of humanitarianism. The taxonomy is not static, however. That is, agencies may migrate across the taxonomy over time depending on the various constraints they face and their flexibility on the multi-dimensional continuum. The Accommodative–Humanitarian agencies are virtually indistinguishable from secular agencies despite their religious roots. The Christian tradition of the Synthesis–Humanitarianism, in contrast, clearly informs its mission and desire to serve as a Christian witness through its service, although the agency will not engage in proselytizing and may tend to reflect secular organizations in its operations. The Evangelistic–Humanitarianism is the most religiously oriented of the classifications with evangelism not only incorporated into its humanitarianism but also its most important objective. Among Evangelistic–Humanitarian agencies, religion will tend to play the most pervasive role at all levels. Christian humanitarian agencies are not a homogenous grouping of faith-based agencies with identical structures, goals, and operations.

In answer to the question posed at the beginning, yes, faith matters. The variation in the role of religion among Christian faith-based agencies is determined by the

theological tradition underlying their "theology" and practices of humanitarianism. For this reason, variation will be observed among Christian faith-based agencies, negating assumptions that they all are of a similar faith-based genre. Faith will have varying influence on the agencies across different dimensions depending on the classification they fall under. The most important insight for governments, donors, and practitioners in the field and scholars of humanitarianism is the necessity to be more attune to the differences among faith-based agencies. The perceived tensions associated with one agency should not be generalized to all. Where there is concern that an Evangelistic–Humanitarian agency may prove counter-active in the political or religious setting of some humanitarian crises, donors should carefully consider the role of faith in the agencies they support. At the same time, in some contexts, as Bornstein highlighted, faith-based agencies of this classification may be more attune to the religious or spiritual context of the communities they are engaged in and be better able to navigate the potential roadblocks to relief and development efforts. Agencies of the Accommodative–Humanitarian type, in particular, may be unsuited to and even ignore the role of spirituality in the lives of the beneficiaries they assist, thereby potentially rendering their work less effective, disrupting the religious culture of the community, or even resulting in the failure of the goals of humanitarian assistance.

Thus, the purpose of this taxonomy is to highlight not only simply the fact that there is variation and faith impacts the structure and operations of faith-based agencies, but, more importantly, also to emphasize that such variations have implications for the success of humanitarian efforts in the field. The tensions noted at the beginning of this article that concern the role of faith-based agencies may, in some cases, be resolved or at least clarified where observers take note of the divergent role of religion. Hence, if there is to be debate, it should be based on a more accurate assessment of the agencies themselves; this taxonomy hopefully moves the discussion a step in that direction. Where the taxonomy of Christian faith-based agencies is overlooked or misunderstood based on the assumption that Christian faith-based agencies all operate the same, there may be undue dangers, opposition, criticism, and refusal to fund certain faith-based agencies to the detriment of humanitarian efforts, and it may also hinder the cooperation or partnership of faith-based agencies with secular agencies and among faith-based agencies themselves. Further research will help to test and strengthen the taxonomy and more fully delineate the implications of the different forms of faith-based humanitarianism in the field.

Appendix

Annex 1 Niebuhr's Christ and culture models

Niebuhr model	View of Christ	View of culture	Christian responsibility	View of institutions	Theological heritage
Christ of culture (Cultural Christian)	A reformer—relevant to contemporary world and who stands for peaceful society based on good moral training	The world is corrupt, but corruption does not reach into the depth of human personality—society needs reform	Christ works through the "human community" when Christians serve in the world	Positive view of secular culture and its institutions as an arena for Christian service	Gnostics, Locke, Kant, Abelard, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Cultural Protestantism
Christ transformer of culture (Transforming Christian)	Emphasis on Christ as Redeemer—a God active in human history who transforms and renews culture	Sin pervades the world, but the world was created good; culture can be redirected through spiritual transformation	Christians must engage actively in culture, as God brings transformation through Christians engaged in culture	Positive view of institutions; arena for Christian vocation to glorify God and spread the redemption message	Gospel of John, Augustine, Calvin
Christ above culture (Synthesis Christian)	Christ and culture are distinct, but Christ works in human nature, reason, and society by his spirit	The world is corrupt, but upheld by God; to deny culture is to deny God. There must be a balance, but one that maintains the distinction	Christians must serve others in obedience to God; cooperation with non-Christians is okay, but a distinctive Christian life/faith must be maintained	Social institutions are instruments to show God's love; institutions serve a rational social purpose	Clement of Alexandria, Aquinas
Christ and culture in Paradox (Dualist Christian)	Christ and culture are not divided, but they must be distinguished; God is more concerned about rules spiritual life	The world is inherently sinful; therefore, all life in culture is corrupt, including human reason. This world is endured	The work of Christians is subject to corruption too; service is not ruled out, but activity of "eternal" value is the most important goal	Social institutions are corrupt, but Christians may serve in them to help hold back the full force of the world's evil. Achieving positive social good is of fleeting value	Apostle Paul, Marcion, Luther, Kierkegaard
Christ against culture (Radical Christian)	Christ's sacrifice was a great act of love through which he has overcome the world	Inherently sinful, the world has no claim to Christian loyalty—Christian life must be in a Christian community	Christians must love others, but loyalty to Christ implies a rejection of secular society or "friendship with the world"	Sin and corruption are pervasive in all social institutions; Christians have no obligation to participate in secular work	Tertullian, Quakers, Mennonites, Tolstoy

Source: Niebuhr (1951)

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