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C. RENÉ PADILLA:
INTEGRAL MISSION AND THE REHAPING OF GLOBAL
EVANGELICALISM

BY

DAVID C. KIRKPATRICK

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
2015
DECLARATION:

I, David C. Kirkpatrick, hereby certify that this thesis has been written by me; that it is the record of work carried out by me; and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for higher degree.

Signature ______________________________

Date        ______________________________
To My Family
Abstract:

As Latin American evangelical theologians awoke to dependency on the North in the post-war period, they set the trajectory for a new contextual brand of evangelical Christianity. Ecuadorian Protestant theologian C. René Padilla (b. 1932) coined the term misión integral (integral mission), which first appeared on a public stage in Lausanne at the influential International Congress on World Evangelization of 1974—signalling both the rise of leadership from the Global South and a wider turn toward holistic mission within the global Protestant evangelical community. The concept of misión integral is an understanding of Christian mission that synthesizes the pursuit of justice with the offer of salvation. Padilla utilized the kingdom of God as the central theological motif in this synthesis. The thesis explores the dynamic interplay between Padilla and the global evangelical networks that formed, developed, and diffused misión integral. This first critical study of Padilla is structured thematically in order to provide a more detailed focus on each stage of this process.

Earlier studies have largely framed misión integral as responding to Catholic theologies of liberation, beginning in the late 1960s or early 1970s. In contrast, I demonstrate that the origins of misión integral are found within a cluster of political and social forces reshaping post-war Latin America: rural-urban migration flows, the resulting complications of urbanization, and the rapid expansion of the universities, where Marxist ideas of revolutionary change presented a growing appeal to students. When Padilla became convinced of the inadequacy of his received North American evangelical theology of mission to meet such challenges, he began a search for theological materials with which he could address the Latin American context. In doing so, he sought to widen the parameters of an evangelical understanding of Christian mission. Padilla’s response was not purely Latin American nor driven by exclusively Latin American concerns. However, Padilla’s theology developed through a multidirectional and international conversation with a wide variety of interlocutors. Padilla became a metaphorical sponge—appropriating new theological perspectives from his undergraduate and graduate studies at Wheaton College in Illinois, his doctoral work in New Testament at the University of Manchester, the Presbyterian missionary-statesman, John A. Mackay, and the holistic tradition of American women missionaries through his closest colleague and wife Catharine Feser Padilla. This thesis explores these multidirectional conversations that shaped the concept of integral mission, and in doing so provides a corrective to current historiography.

The process of developing the contours of integral mission would continue over the next two decades in a further series of transnational theological conversations. Particularly important were those Padilla conducted with the Peruvian Baptist Samuel Escobar and the Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana (Latin American Theological Fraternity), the British Anglican John R. W. Stott and the global evangelical movement, and the Argentine Methodist José Míguez Bonino and the ecumenical movement. Padilla’s theological networks cut both ways—influencing him and diffusing his influence to a wider Christian constituency. In focusing on these interlocutors, this thesis provides an assessment of the nature of Padilla’s influence upon the growing acceptance of integral mission within global evangelicalism. Today, the language of integral mission is being increasingly adopted by evangelical mission and relief organizations, evangelical political activists, official congress declarations, and Protestant ecclesial movements around the world.
Acknowledgements:

From childhood, Spanish has been part of my life through the influence of my parents and my beloved great uncle “Tío Bill”, who was Professor of Spanish at Carthage College in Wisconsin for many years. I am indebted to an array of teachers for instilling in me a love for the Spanish language and Latin American culture—most notably my mother, mí Tío Bill, and St. Francis Xavier High School teacher señora Mary Elmer. The research questions that drove this thesis first emerged in 2007 while I was living with my dear friends the Juárez family and studying at El Instituto Cultural Oaxaca in Oaxaca, Mexico. My time spent with an Oaxacan evangélico house church provided more questions than answers, including ‘what truly is Latin American?’ and the extent of influence from North American missionaries upon Latin American Protestant Christianities. This project is, in some ways, an attempt to grapple with those questions.

My PhD studies were funded by the College of Humanities and Social Science as a Global Research Scholar, and by New College, School of Divinity. New College also provided various research and travel grants, including for my fieldwork in Buenos Aires. In 2012, I also received funding from the Yale-Edinburgh World Christianity Group for archival work at Yale University Divinity School. I am grateful for these.

I am indebted to Professor Doug Sweeney of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School for connecting my understanding of Latin America with my emerging passion for the study of history. Professor Sweeney began meeting with me—often weekly—while he was on sabbatical (!) in 2011 and encouraged me to explore studying René Padilla and global evangelicalism. He has continued to be a source of encouragement and guidance throughout my PhD—including a visit to Edinburgh in 2014. Perhaps his best advice was to study with Professor Brian Stanley at the University of Edinburgh.

The strongest insights in this thesis have the fingerprints of my supervisor Professor Brian Stanley upon them. Professor Stanley has been the quintessential advisor—insightful, thorough, and dedicated. His patient and wise mentorship has made me a better historian and person, and for that I am sincerely grateful. The significant contributions of this thesis have been shaped by him, while every shortcoming remains my own.

I am grateful to Dr. Naomi Haynes, who has been a dedicated secondary supervisor. Her timely advice, supervision, and encouragement pushed me forward at critical times. I have learned immensely from her mentorship and interdisciplinary insight.

I am also grateful to Professor Andrew Walls for his example and wisdom over these three years—conversations at the Yale-Edinburgh group at Yale and Edinburgh, at the Centre for the Study of World Christianity, and over coffee in Edinburgh Waverley train station. Thank you for your friendship and influence.

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To Dr. Samuel Escobar and Lilly Artola de Escobar: for their hospitality in Valencia, unrestricted access to personal papers, and multiple days of interviews. I am also grateful to Rose Costas, Dr. Pedro Arana, and Ruth Padilla DeBorst for their time and insights into this project.

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Historians could never practice our craft without the work of dedicated librarians and archivists. I am grateful to Bob Shuster, Paul Ericksen, and the staff of the Billy Graham Center Archives in Wheaton, Illinois, Adele Allen at Lambeth Palace Library in London, Kirsty Thorburn at the IFES in Oxford, Rob Krapohl at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Martha Smalley and Kevin Crawford of Yale Divinity School, Craig Miller at Palmer Theological Seminary and Diana S. H. Bacci at Eastern University. I am also grateful to Wheaton President Dr. Philip Rykan and IFES General Secretary Dr. Daniel Bourdanné for providing access to restricted files.

I am grateful for the friendship and camaraderie of my colleagues at the University of Edinburgh and the Centre for the Study of World Christianity. I am especially grateful to Dr. Andrew Kaiser, Dr. Corey Williams, and Dr. Alex Chow who were close friends on this journey, sharpening me daily. Thanks also to Amber Thomas, Tom Breimaier, Prasad Phillips, Will Kelly, Steven Stiles, and Amos Bongadu Chewachong for the encouragement of their friendship.

Special thanks to my dear friends Andy and Sarah Prime, Luc Gillon, and Sophie Ashton for making Edinburgh home. My best friends from Chicago also continue to be a source of strength and encouragement. I am especially thankful for Justin and Amanda Wevers, Dan and Linzy Westman, Devin and Sara Pogue, and Vince Pierri. Sincere thanks also to my extended family—especially the entire Cook family—for their love and encouragement at every point in this process.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my family. To my brother (Dr.) Andy for letting me follow him to the library as a freshman at the University of Wisconsin in Stevens Point and imitate his study habits. I would not be here without your example, friendship, and brotherly-love. To my sister Kelli and brother-in-law Ronaldo: two of the most insightful, inspiring people I know. Thank you for your love and support. To my nephews Judah and Titus for Skype calls that always brightened my day. Most of all, to my parents, Dr. John and Cindy: For a lifetime of support and wisdom that has anchored my life, and for teaching me the “others-centered life”: that everyone has a story worth listening to—especially the hurting, the downtrodden, and the marginalized. Soli Deo gloria.

David C. Kirkpatrick
Edinburgh
2015
### Abbreviations

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATE</td>
<td>Evangelical Theological Association, <em>Asociación Teológica Evangélica</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGCA</td>
<td>Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton, Illinois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGEA</td>
<td>Billy Graham Evangelistic Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELA</td>
<td>Latin American Evangelical Conference, <em>Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CELAM</td>
<td>Conference of Latin American Bishops, <em>Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEPAL</td>
<td>Economic Commission for Latin America, <em>Comisión Económico para América Latina</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CICOP</td>
<td>Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLADE</td>
<td>Latin American Congress on Evangelization, <em>Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTL</td>
<td>Latin American Theological Fraternity, <em>Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFES</td>
<td>International Fellowship of Evangelical Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAMS</td>
<td>International Association for Mission Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISAL</td>
<td>Church and Society in Latin America, <em>Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISEDET</td>
<td><em>Instituto Superior Evangélico de Estudios Teológicos</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAM</td>
<td>Latin America Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCM</td>
<td>Student Christian Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCC</td>
<td>World Council of Churches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCASA</td>
<td>Wheaton College Archives and Special Collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEF</td>
<td>World Evangelical Fellowship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSCF</td>
<td>World Student Christian Federation</td>
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Chapter One: Introduction

The story of Protestant Christianity in Latin America is one marked by migration, missions, and negotiation—with a dominant Catholic majority and missionary leadership primarily from North America. Prior to the First World War, Protestant communities were mainly the product of early nineteenth-century immigration.¹ As the nineteenth century progressed, two realities converged in the fields of politics and religion: the growing independence of Latin American nations from the colonial powers of Spain and Portugal, and the legacy of the Second Great Awakening in the United States, a Protestant revival movement that flourished from the 1790s to the 1820s. Those factors gave rise to new missionary initiatives from the North, and an influx of Protestant missionaries from the United States into Latin America.² After Ecuadorian independence in 1822, for example, the liberal reforms of president José Eloy Alfaro Delgado opened the door to a wider foreign missionary presence.³ According to Washington Padilla, at the end of the nineteenth century, and into the first part of the twentieth century, every Protestant missionary in Ecuador was from the United States.⁴ During the first Alfaro presidency (1895-1901), the Gospel


² Ibid., 206-207.


⁴ Ibid., 164. Washington Padilla was an Ecuadorian professor, evangelical missionary, and René’s older brother. He received a BA at Rockmont College in Denver, Colorado, in 1953, and a M.Div. at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1956. He was Chaplain and Professor of Philosophy, Ethics, and Bible at Colegio Teodoro W. Anderson de Quito (1969-1975), Professor of English at La Universidad Central del
Mission Union was established in 1896, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance in 1897—Protestant denominations from the United States that comprise 40% of Ecuadorian Protestants today. In 1906 (during Alfaro’s second presidency), the Alfaro government established a new constitution, which, at least on paper, included the separation of church and state and wider restrictions on Catholic clerical influence in areas such as education. It is no coincidence that the years 1900-1912 saw the establishment of influential missions such as those described above, and also the American Bible Society (la Sociedad Biblica Americana), and Evangelical Mission Union (Unión Misionera Evangélica). Yet, none of these missions could boast an indigenous church membership roll of more than 100 by 1910.

At the turn of the twentieth century, wider trends in migration began to reshape the internal structure of Latin American life. In 1960, political scientist George Blanksten observed the tail end of these migration patterns saying, “There is no Latin American country in which there has been a trend away from urbanisation; everywhere the impressive fact has been the movement toward the city, the swelling

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of urban populations.” After the Second World War, Protestantism began to gain a foothold as urbanization provided a new social context for religious life. Protestant churches found acceptance at the margins of this new urban environment, growing in places that traditional Roman Catholic structures largely struggled to reach. Until the 1960s, nearly 90% of Latin Americans self-identified as Catholic. Today, nearly 20% of Latin Americans self-identify as Protestant. Put another way, only one-in-ten Latin Americans alive today were raised Protestant, while nearly one-in-five now self-identify as such. The visibility and influence that Protestants now experience was a distant thought during the first half of the twentieth century. As a marginalized religious minority community, the Protestant path into the present day was one marked by oppression, discrimination, and violence.

The family of Ecuadorian evangelical C. René Padilla (b. 1932) was part of this wider story of rural-urban migration into Colombia in the 1930s. When he was two-and-a-half years old, Padilla’s family moved from his birthplace of Quito, Ecuador, to neighboring Colombia in 1934, as his father sought a better market for his

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12 Ibid. Countries with the largest Protestant communities are largely located in Central America (Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala). Two countries now no longer have a Catholic majority—Honduras and Uruguay (46% and 42% respectively).
tailoring business. Colombia was experiencing unprecedented economic growth—especially in the textile industry. Bogotá experienced a population boom that was typical of Latin American cities. Padilla’s father Carlos Padilla was, as Padilla put it, a tailor by necessity, and an evangelical church planter by choice. Both Padilla’s parents became evangelical Christians before he was born, through the influence of René’s uncle, Eddie Vuerto, who, according to Padilla, was one of the first evangelical pastors in Ecuador. While economics was the impetus for crossing borders, evangelism drove the Padillas to move often within the city of Bogotá itself. The Padilla family’s evangelical activism did not go unnoticed by local Roman Catholics. Multiple arson attempts were made on the Padilla household, while numerous evangelical church buildings were burned down around them. René was unable to attend first grade because the local school rejected Protestant children—a woman from their church taught him at home, instead. When Padilla was able to attend school, the challenges only increased. To this day, Padilla bears

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15 Statesman’s Yearbook, 1945. See also ibid. I will further explore this in chapter three, pp. 81-87.


17 Ibid.


scars from stones thrown at him as he walked down the streets of Bogotá, as early as age seven. The Padilla family moved back to Ecuador when he was twelve years old, fleeing this religious persecution.²⁰ Ecuador did not provide the safe haven the Padillas sought, however. Both René and his older brother Washington were later expelled from school—René for not attending a Roman Catholic procession, and Washington for arguing with a teacher from the Bible. Twice people came to their house to burn it down, but were stopped by police.²¹ By the time Padilla was eighteen years old, multiple attempts had been made on his own life, including an assassination attempt while preaching outside his father’s new church.²² Padilla has described the “persecution” as “part and parcel of life for non-Roman Catholic Christians and others in pre-²⁰ Vatican Council Days.”²³ Looking back, he simply notes this was part of being a faithful evangelical Christian in his social location: “In Colombia you had to identify yourself as an Evangelical Christian, and if you did, you had to pay the consequences.”²⁴

As an economic migrant and as a member of a religious minority, Padilla came of age within a context of violence, oppression and exclusion. The relationship


²² René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September 2013.

²³ Padilla, “My Theological Pilgrimage,” 93.

between suffering and theology was an organic one for Padilla—though he lacked social theological categories at the time. Padilla later recalled “longing to understand the meaning of the Christian faith in relation to issues of justice and peace in a society deeply marked by oppression, exploitation, and abuse of power.” For Padilla, his “inherited” Protestant evangelical understanding of the gospel, however, provided little answer to the questions posed by the Latin American context. It spoke strongly of an individual, vertical salvation while remaining muted on “social dimensions in the gospel” to address horizontal issues. The question, for Padilla, was not whether the gospel spoke to a radical Latin American context, but how.

1.1. The Relationship between Evangelism and Social Action in Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century

The relationship between evangelism and social action in Christian mission has been an interpretive crux for Protestant evangelicals in the twentieth century. The issue became increasingly controversial in the late 1960s and early 1970s as mission leaders from traditional ‘mission fields’ spoke back to ‘sending countries’ in what has often been called a global reflex. This took place both at public gatherings and in personal correspondence. In Latin America, this conversation had the characteristics of a dialogue between North American fundamentalism and the Latin American socio-political context. Demonstrating this tension, on August 10, 1972, Padilla commented in a personal letter to the American neo-evangelical theologian Carl F. H. Henry (1913-2003): “Young people [ask] questions regarding the Christian attitude towards a Marxist regime, while the pastors [discuss] the length of the skirts that girls

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26 Ibid., 94-95.
are wearing in church. A social ethic—we have none.” Padilla observed a critical disconnect between Latin American ecclesiological emphases and sociopolitical reality—a striking parallel to one that the letter’s recipient had noted decades earlier.

In his brief but influential study *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1947), Henry likewise had decried a shallow moralistic ecclesiological context: one dominated by premillennial dispensationalism and separated from postwar contextual social realities. Padilla’s 1972 personal correspondence with Henry continued in Latin America, where in 1973 Henry carried out a 40-day trip to eight Latin American countries under the auspices of the Latin American Theological Fraternity (*Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana*, which I will describe below). Padilla’s letter also sheds light on the missionary-influenced ecclesiological context of Latin America, one dominated by the influence of fundamentalist missionary organizations and a correspondingly dispensational eschatology. In a 1965 report on student work in Latin America, Padilla lamented the “clear regression” of missionary influence on journalism and church practice. For Padilla, the aloofness of Christian mission from social realities was “much more dangerous” than tobacco, alcohol, and dance—

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29 The term fundamentalist is used here in the technical, historical sense of the word.
traditional fundamentalist emphases. This was a “crisis in evangelization” according to Padilla. In 1972, the year of Padilla’s letter to Henry, aftershocks of the Cuban revolution continued to echo throughout Latin America and Padilla’s adopted country of Argentina was in the midst of a military regime, along with political and economic turmoil. The following year, Juan Perón would return from exile, further exacerbating the crises. This socio-political tumult, coupled with a perceived overemphasis on mission as ‘saving souls,’ produced unique, contextual questions for Latin American Protestant thinkers such as Padilla. This correspondence also has clear relevance outside of Latin America: it was a harbinger of future debates within global Protestant evangelicalism, debates surrounding the question of social action within an evangelical understanding of mission and evangelism. These debates had no exact precedent in evangelical discourse before the twentieth century.

Prior to the twentieth century, a dynamic partnership between evangelism and social action was widely accepted and even assumed within evangelical Protestant discourse, even though the theological rationale for action on social questions was often of an undeveloped or instrumental kind. Indeed, many early progenitors of the Social Gospel movement were evangelicals. The expression ‘social gospel’ was first articulated in both Britain and the United States in the late 1880s. B.F. Westcott, bishop of Durham and former Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge University utilized the term in his work *Social Aspects of Christianity*, which derived

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from a series of sermons preached at Westminster Abbey in 1886. The General Baptist minister John Clifford also used the term two years later at his Baptist Union presidential address. As the century turned, the nineteenth-century evangelical consensus on social action split into two identifiable communities. One side became twentieth-century fundamentalists, who reacted against ‘modernizing’ tendencies—what has been widely regarded as the ‘great reversal’ of social theological emphases. The other side progressively broadened their Christianity by developing a theology of social transformation based on the theological motif of the kingdom of God (I will expand on this historiography below). The so-called Social Gospel became increasingly contested as the rise of modernism challenged evangelical leaders, especially in North America, regarding approaches to the study of the Bible and the authority of science. Fundamentalists, in reacting against these perceived excesses, swung toward a greater focus on evangelization rather than social action in an attempt to stop the drift. Many have followed this narrative. This ‘great reversal’, however, is largely a theoretical construct that has been read back into the historical narrative by those who see it as a retrograde development. Although the concept has its validity and a degree of explanatory power, it does not fit the full range of evangelical experience at any period, and therefore is shorthand for careful, nuanced


34 Thompson, “John Clifford,” 207.

35 See pp. 32-34.

investigation. The spectrum has always been broader, and more complex than a
monochrome reversal as previous tradition would imply.

For example, the narrative of a ‘great reversal’ often overlooks the fact that
many African American Christian leaders continued to maintain a robust
understanding of social action in Christian mission right through the twentieth
century. African American pastors such as the Baptist Gardner Taylor often spoke of
the social dimensions of the gospel, as did Taylor during his 42-year tenure as pastor
of Concord Baptist Church of Christ (CBCC) in New York City, which began in
1948. 37 His message spoke of the need for spiritual as well as structural
reformation. 38 Gardner was theologically evangelical, though many African
American leaders identified the term evangelical as a white term. 39 (This ‘great
reversal’ narrative also fails to account for the tendency of women missionaries to
develop more holistic understandings of Christian mission during the nineteenth and
early twentieth centuries, as well). 40 In comparison to his white counterparts in the

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37 For a brief biography of Taylor, see Timothy George, James Earl Massey
and Robert Smith, Jr., eds., Our Sufficiency is of God: Essays on Preaching in Honor
of Gardner C. Taylor (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2010), x-xxi. For more
on his life, see Gerald Lamont Thomas, African American Preaching: The
Contribution of Dr. Gardner C. Taylor, vol. 5 of Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial
Studies in Religion, Culture, and Social Development, ed. Mozella G. Mitchell (New
York: Peter Lang, 2004).

38 See for example Gardner Taylor, “What Are You Doing Here? (John
13:34),” 12 October, 1969, in The Words of Gardner Taylor: NBC Radio Sermons,
Press), 56-60.

39 See Milton G. Sernett, “Black Religion and the Question of Evangelical
Identity,” in The Variety of American Evangelicalism, ed. Donald W. Dayton and

40 Dana Lee Robert, American Women in Mission: A Social History of their
Thought and Practice (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996). I will expand on
this discussion on pp. 126-140.
United States, Gardner was more the exception than the rule with regard to discourse on social action in Christian mission. By the 1940s, many fundamentalist leaders in the United States became increasingly restless with the state of fundamentalism and its perceived lack of influence on and engagement with postwar American culture. Until the 1960s little momentum was made in developing a more satisfactory conservative Protestant discourse on Christian mission and social action. However, beginning in 1966 a series of congresses dramatically accelerated the conversation on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Berlin Congress on World Evangelization in 1966 can trace its origins to a taxi conversation between Billy Graham and Carl F. H. Henry.41 The official papers from the congress echoed the epochal missionary conferences in New York in 1900, and Edinburgh in 1910 by saying “Our goal is nothing short of the evangelization of the human race in this generation.”42 Evangelical leaders at Berlin were also emphatic about the dimensions of evangelization: “Evangelism is the proclamation of the Gospel of the crucified and risen Christ…”43 The congress then outlined the “task” of Christian missionaries through four verbs: to proclaim, to invite to discipleship, to baptize and to teach. John Stott’s plenary address also set out to “re-


examine our marching orders.” Stott argued, “The commission of the Church…is not to reform society, but to preach the Gospel…the primary task of the members of Christ’s Church is to be Gospel heralds, not social reformers.” As if to not be misunderstood, Stott emphatically repeated, “Again, the commission of the Church is not to heal the sick, but to preach the Gospel.” Padilla’s closest public colleague Samuel Escobar attended Berlin 1966 and later extolled Stott’s teaching there. The congress had been unambiguous with regard to the mission of the church, affirming that the need for evangelization was primary and urgent. When Graham began to plan for a follow-up to Berlin 1966, there was little indication that the next congress on evangelization would challenge this widely held assumption of the primacy of evangelism. Yet, across the Atlantic a group of young evangelical Anglicans in Britain were beginning to press for an increased emphasis on the social dimensions of the gospel.

David Bebbington has called the National Evangelical Anglican Congress at Keele in 1967 “the chief landmark in a post-war evangelical renaissance.”

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45 Ibid., 50.

46 Ibid., 51.


Congress was a gathering of several generations of evangelical Anglican leaders. The younger leaders pushed for greater emphasis on social action and addressing contextual issues of Christian mission. At Keele, Stott played an instrumental role in reconciling the older and younger generations—foreshadowing his later role at the Lausanne Congress of 1974. After disagreement and debate, the result of the Congress was a significant statement on the role of social action in Christian mission. Particularly notable was a section titled “The Scope of Mission”: “Evangelism and compassionate service belong together in the mission of God.” Stott in particular was prescient in recognizing the social conscience of a new generation of evangelical leadership and the need to create room for their thinking. He was also beginning to reexamine his own understanding of the relationship between evangelism and social action. Yet, Stott’s experience at the Keele Congress cannot fully explain his later ‘conversion’ to holistic Christian mission. In the years that followed the Keele Congress, Stott was increasingly influenced by a wider conversation within global evangelical Protestantism, one driven by concerns from leadership in the developing world and on university campuses around the world. Stott’s sensitivity to a younger generation of evangelical thinkers (who were increasingly non-white and non-Western) meant he was especially influenced by these wider trends. Padilla recalled


52 See Alister Chapman, *Godly Ambition*, 118-119. Chapman does not, however, credit Keele with completely changing Stott’s mind. While it shook up his understanding, it was not until after the Lausanne Congress of 1974 that Stott wrote his redefinition of Christian mission in *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1975).
meeting Stott in July 1959 at Tyndale House in Cambridge. Padilla was in Europe for the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students’ (IFES) general committee in Paris. When Padilla returned to England four years later for his PhD studies, he was “astounded” when Stott remembered his name.

From the 1960s, minority voices became amplified in the West as emerging postcolonial discourse called for greater attention to the social location of knowledge. In the field of religion postcolonialists called for the acknowledgement of the contextuality of all knowledge—that every theology is undeniably local. This meant there was no longer ‘theology’ but rather theologies—North American theology, Latin American theology, African theology, and European theology, for example. Armed with these ideas, theologians from the developing world began to challenge traditionally held assumptions regarding propositional truth and rote formulae for the evangelization and discipleship of Christians. They also decried imported or prepackaged answers to their contextual challenges—challenging long-held evangelical Protestant traditions. Many Western Protestant evangelical leaders remained unaware of, or simply chose to ignore, the growing voices and discourse from Third World thinkers. These voices, however, became harder to ignore—

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53 For more on the significance of Tyndale House for the emergence of evangelical biblical scholarship, see Stanley, *Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism*, 93-95.

54 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September 2013.

especially for mission leaders in international organizations such as IFES or the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA). Similarly, few could deny these increasingly influential voices after the First International Congress on World Evangelization (often known as Lausanne 1974), due to the prominence of African, Asian, and Latin American leaders at the congress and on its platform. These leaders brought their experience in contexts of oppression, violence, and sociopolitical unrest into discussions of the contemporary missionary problems of the day. René Padilla in particular channeled his experience of being a member of a religious minority in an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic continent in what proved to be the most controversial of plenary speeches at the Lausanne Congress of 1974.\footnote{This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter seven.}

A growing body of literature has begun to note the importance of the 1974 International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne. Grant Wacker’s recent academic biography of Billy Graham called the Lausanne Congress “extraordinarily influential.”\footnote{Wacker, \textit{America’s Pastor: Billy Graham and the Shaping of a Nation}, 229. See also p. 244 for Graham’s “awakening to the social implications of the gospel.”} Mark Noll chose two events as “turnings points” in the history of Christianity in the second half of the twentieth century: the Second Vatican Council and Lausanne 1974.\footnote{Mark A. Noll, \textit{Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity} (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 287.} Brian Stanley perhaps most clearly summarized the importance of the event:

For many Evangelicals issues of social and economic justice remained marginal to their understanding of the mission of the Church. That situation only began to change once it became clear that Evangelicalism was now a multi-cultural global community which included a large and growing sector that was neither white nor affluent. The point at which that realisation dawned on some Evangelicals in the North can be identified quite precisely: it was at
the International Congress on World Evangelization held at Lausanne in July.\textsuperscript{59}

The controversial nature of integral mission within evangelical circles can only be understood against the background of the theological landscape of the postwar period. David Bebbington has clearly demonstrated that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, evangelical social action was largely justified theologically, either through the removal of "obstacles to the progress of the gospel", or through the elimination of social sins that contravened divine commands.\textsuperscript{60} In terms of theological methodology, this fitted squarely within what David Bosch called a “two-mandate approach”, which predominated in evangelical theological circles prior to the 1970s.\textsuperscript{61} This method bifurcated Christian mission into a primary, spiritual mandate and a subordinate social mandate. Thus, even while many Protestant evangelicals began to speak in more explicitly social theological terms, such as Carl F. H. Henry in his well-known \textit{The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism}, the conversation often concerned “implications of the gospel” rather than the content of the message itself.\textsuperscript{62} In contrast, what has become known as integral mission is an understanding of Christian mission that posits that social action


and evangelism are essential and indivisible components of Christian mission—indeed that both are central aspects within the Christian gospel. Put more clearly, integral mission synthesizes the pursuit of justice with the offer of salvation. Padilla’s use of the term derives from his homemade *pan integral*, or whole-wheat bread (this term will be described below). When Padilla and others suggested that the gospel had social *dimensions*, this worried many evangelical leaders (including many from the Global South) who feared that evangelicals were drifting toward emphases characteristic of the ecumenical movement such as those which had marked the Uppsala assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1968.Padilla was not simply positing theological formulations for intellectuals to consider. He was bringing the Latin American context to bear on contemporary missiological issues in the global evangelical community.

The story of evangelical Protestantism in Latin America from the early twentieth century to immediately following the Second Vatican Council is similar to the lived reality of many religious minorities around the world—one of marginalization, oppression, and even violence. The growth of Protestant churches coincided with the increasing involvement of the United States’ foreign policy in Latin America during the Cold War era. In some cases military dictatorships were friendlier to Protestants than to Catholics—as the Catholic hierarchy held power and influence, while increasingly siding with the poor. By implication, many

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64 See for example Hartch, *The Rebirth of Latin American Christianity*, 59-61.
Protestants were seen as foreigners in their own land—labeled ‘gringos’ and Yankees. Many Roman Catholic priests and authorities viewed Protestant evangelistic efforts toward so-called nominal Roman Catholics as imposing on their religious turf. Priests and religious authorities sometimes played into these fears by stoking up mobs for violence against Protestants. Thus, Padilla’s repudiation of forms of Christian theology fashioned in the United States was more than a theological statement—it was a reflection of broad Latin American antipathy toward US foreign policy in the region, and of Latin American Protestant evangelical sensitivity to being associated with certain colleagues in the North.

Padilla’s story of oppression, violence and marginalization was a somewhat common experience for evangelical Protestants within overwhelmingly Roman Catholic postwar Latin America. But it is also atypical in its trajectory and end point. How did the story of a young Ecuadorian—born within an impoverished, religious minority—become intertwined with some of the most powerful players in the religious and political world? Perhaps the answer lies within evangelical networks, such as student movements and educational institutions, churches and missionary agencies. There remains a gap in our understanding of the story of integral mission. None of the present literature has focused on where integral mission

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65 Carlos Mondragón, Like Leaven in the Dough : Protestant Social Thought in Latin America, 1920-1950 (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2010), 19. This reality has been recounted to the researcher by several evangelical Protestants within North America (Chicago, Mexico), the Caribbean (Dominican Republic), and South America (Argentina).

66 See, for example, the account of SCM staff worker and later general secretary Valdo Gallard, Yale Divinity School Archives, World Christian Student Federation Papers, Collection 46, Box 284, Folder 2500.

67 See Goff, "The Persecution of Protestant Christians in Colombia, 1948-1958, with an Investigation of its Background and Causes."
came from, or how it is related particularly to the Latin American context. It is here that this thesis enters the conversation.

1.2. Academic Contribution to Relevant Fields of Historiography

This thesis sits at the intersection of three fields of academic discourse: the history of evangelical social ethics and missiology, the history of Latin American Protestantism, and the history of theologies of liberation. I will review briefly the main literature in each of these fields and indicate how this thesis will address imbalances and fill in crucial gaps.

The 1970s marked the beginning of an upswing within academic discourse on social ethics and missiology. Timothy L. Smith was the first to use the phrase ‘great reversal’ to refer to the supposed evangelical abandonment of social action (discussed above) during the period 1910-1930 in his Harvard PhD dissertation in 1955 and in a subsequent series of published lectures. 68 David Moberg then popularized the term in his 1972 book The Great Reversal: Evangelism Versus Social Concern. 69 While various writers have challenged the adequacy of the great reversal as an interpretive framework for evangelicalism as a whole, many have taken it to be the interpretive lens through which to see the relationship between Christian mission and the Fundamentalist/Modernist controversy in the United States. 70 Books such as Timothy

68 Timothy L. Smith, "Popular Protestantism in Mid-Nineteenth Century America" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1955).


Chester’s *Awakening to a World in Need: The Recovery of Evangelical Social Concern* are built on the premise of the great reversal. While the ‘great reversal’ is in danger of becoming a ‘great excuse’ for avoiding careful, nuanced, sustained examination of the data, the theoretical concept did spur greater exploration of what exactly was the relationship between social action and Christian mission in the postwar period especially. Al Tizon’s *Transformation after Lausanne: Radical Evangelical Mission in Global-Local Perspective* (2008) engaged the history of evangelical attitudes toward evangelism and social action through the lens of ‘Mission as Transformation’, a concept developed by the Church of South India Canon Dr. Vinay Samuel. Tizon then applied these ideas to his own Filipino context.\(^71\) Similarly, Valdir Steuernagel has written a helpful dissertation on the missiology of the Lausanne Movement.\(^72\) Chester highlighted the contribution of Escobar and Padilla at Lausanne 1974, and arguing for the “tremendous impact” of the Lausanne Covenant—especially its reference to social action.\(^73\) While increasing emphasis has been placed on the Lausanne Congress of 1974, previous studies have been largely superseded by Brian Stanley in his *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott* (2013). Stanley provided an incisive account of the transatlantic networks that diffused evangelicalism around

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\(^71\) Tizon, *Transformation after Lausanne*, 73-77.

\(^72\) Valdir Steuernagel, "The Theology of Missions in its Relation to Social Responsibility within the Lausanne Movement" (PhD diss., Lutheran School of Theology, 1988).

the world. In his chapter on Christian Mission and Social Justice Stanley does justice to the multidirectional conversation that was taking place in the postwar period regarding social action and evangelism in global evangelicalism. In doing so, Stanley highlights “the new evangelicals of Latin America, Africa, and Asia” who “sound[ed] the clearest notes of a radical alternative evangelicalism at Lausanne.” Stanley’s sustained discussion of the contribution of Padilla, Escobar, Costas, and Kenyan John Gatu was the most thorough to date. This emerging body of literature has cast light on the crucial conversation within Protestant evangelicalism in the postwar period. Whether this was a recovery of social action or simply a fundamental shift in language, the important question remains: from where did it arise? And if it arose from the Latin American context in particular, what was its relationship to contextual realities in the region? This thesis will seek to contribute to this ongoing conversation, providing clarity to the ambiguity that currently surrounds the emergence of these holistic themes.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, three books signaled a wider turn toward Latin American Protestantism within the academic study of religion: Sheldon Annis’ *God and Production in a Guatemalan Town*, David Stoll’s *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth*, and David Martin’s *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*. Sheldon Annis wrote a groundbreaking ethnographic study of the impact of Protestant missions within a Guatemalan village. Annis’ work was the beginning of a wave of ethnographies

74 This chapter is an expanded version of the article Brian Stanley, "'Lausanne 1974': The Challenge from the Majority World to Northern-Hemisphere Evangelicalism," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 64, no. 3 (2013).

75 Stanley, *Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism*. 
within the social anthropology of Christianity in Latin America. David Stoll’s *Is Latin America Turning Protestant? The Politics of Evangelical Growth* had two goals: first, to explain the growth of Protestantism post-1980; and second, to warn Latin American evangelicals of their cooptation by conservative politicians in the United States. Stoll’s focus on North American politics detracted from an accurate analysis of the Latin American situation and at times the interpretation drifted into stereotypes. Stoll also began this narrative in the 1970s, and explained the growth of integral approaches to missions among Protestant evangelicals by reference to liberation theology (though he presented the Latin American Theological Fraternity in a sympathetic light). The third book to break new ground in the early 1990s was David Martin’s *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*. This book had the widest scope of the three, and stimulated a series of studies by other scholars. Andrew Chesnut’s *Competitive Spirits: Latin America’s New Religious Economy* (2003) focused on three topics: Pentecostals, the Catholic

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78 Ibid. See especially chapter four on the evangelical mission movement, pp. 78-141.

79 Ibid., 131-132. The Latin American Theological Fraternity will be discussed in chapter five.

Charismatic renewal (CCR), and African diasporic religion in Latin America. In 2008 Odina González and Justo González published a comprehensive history of Protestantism in Latin America. González and González identified the FTL for its early emphasis on the social aspects of the Gospel, and the “structural dimensions of the social and economic problems of Latin America.” Yet, their work left the question unanswered: why was the FTL idiosyncratic in comparison to other Protestant evangelicals in the region? Todd Hartch’s *The Rebirth of Latin American Christianity* (2014) provides a clearer picture of the wider ecclesial context of both Roman Catholic and Protestant Christianity. Hartch argued that growing Protestant competition in the religious marketplace revitalized Roman Catholicism in the second half of the twentieth century, rather than weakened it. This larger argument follows the pattern of recent studies such as Roman Catholic priest Edward Cleary’s *How Latin America Saved the Soul of the Catholic Church.* Carlos Mondragón contributed a helpful study of the “liberal” end of Protestantism and its social thought in the first half of the twentieth century. His study does not deal with “the Evangelical Face of Protestantism.”

A series of doctoral dissertations has also contributed to the ongoing scholarly conversation concerned with Latin American Protestantism, and the contribution of

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83 Hartch, *The Rebirth of Latin American Christianity*.


the Latin American Theological Fraternity in particular. Literature on the specifically evangelical strands of Latin American Protestantism has been sporadic and dominated by the field of theology rather than history. Anthony Christopher Smith posited a qualitative analysis of Latin American Protestant evangelical missiology in his 1983 PhD thesis. Diememme E. Noelliste’s 1987 theology thesis at Northwestern University posited a theological middle way between liberation theology and conservative evangélicos (treating the latter as homogeneous). Mariano Avila’s 1996 Biblical Studies thesis assessed whether the hermeneutic of the FTL was a viable option for evangelicals. David del Salto’s work helpfully isolated the respective individual contributions of Padilla and Puerto Rican colleague Orlando Costas, who was dean and Adoniram Judson Professor of Missiology at Andover Newton Theological School in Newton, Massachusetts, when he passed away in 1987. But del Salto focused exclusively on Padilla’s and Costas’ Christology in isolation from its historical context, and also misconstrued Padilla’s work in places.

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89 David del Salto, "The Promise of a Trinitarian Christology for the Latin American Evangelical Church" (PhD diss., Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, 2008), 91, 96. For example, he argues that Padilla’s “triune framework” is something relatively new to Padilla’s work.
Antonio Carlos Barro’s 1996 thesis focused on ecumenical interactions between Costas and José Miguez-Bonino. Allen Yeh’s Oxford DPhil thesis (2008) provides a first-rate historical and theological biography of Costas. Jeffrey Tippner’s St. Andrews PhD thesis (2012) also focused on Costas. Yeh’s work is more thorough and historically sensitive (as compared to Tippner’s artificial framework of hymn, gospel song, psalm and poem). Tippner also deliberately avoided interviews and unpublished resources, which is confusing considering the limited years of Costas’ publications (1971-1987). Because of these recent treatments, Costas’ work will feature less prominently here.

The most recent historiography on Latin American evangelical Protestant influence has been surprisingly ambiguous regarding its origins. For example, Daniel Salinas’ Latin American Evangelical Theology in the 1970s: The Golden Decade (2009) followed Stoll by excluding the 1950s and 1960s focusing instead on the 1970s. Because of this periodization, the narrative falls within the timeline of the rise of liberation theology. Salinas was also concerned primarily with the dialogical process between main actors and what “the people…involved in the Latin American


93 Tippner, “Third World Evangelical Missiology”, 3.

evangelical theological production—either authors or readers—perceived as crucial.95 The term ‘integral mission’ only appeared once in his work.96 Sharon Heaney’s *Contextual Theology for Latin America: Liberation Themes in Evangelical Perspective* (2008) was a helpful attempt at a systematization of Latin American Protestant evangelical theology.97 Heaney’s title suggests that evangelical Protestants simply provided their own version of a pre-existing social theological framework. Although she disavowed the notion that integral mission was simply a reaction to liberation theology, nearly every chapter discusses Protestant evangelical social theology in relation to the dominant narrative of liberation theology.98 This raises important questions: To what extent was integral mission simply an evangelical Protestant response to liberation theology? To what extent did integral mission borrow from the framework or ideas of liberation theology? None of these studies has focused on or isolated the contribution of René Padilla, or asked questions regarding his influence in comparison to that of Samuel Escobar—his closest public colleague for over forty years. How did Padilla’s influence differ from that of Escobar? Who was the primary mind behind integral mission? Similarly, which of the two should be considered the primary influence over wider missiological and theological discourse in evangelical Protestant circles?

Literature on the history of theologies of liberation has tended to assume that Protestant social theology is simply derivative from a Roman Catholic mainstream. Liberation theologians have often simultaneously written theology and history—

95 Salinas, *Golden Decade*, 25. This question rises from his methodology of reception history (*rezeptionsgeschichte*).


97 Heaney, *Contextual Theology for Latin America*, 250.

98 Ibid., 5.
positing their own version of how they came to their theological methodology.

Enrique Dussel wrote his 1976 History and the Theology of Liberation from this perspective. A proponent of liberation theology himself, Dussel ignored the Protestant movements that exerted significant influence on the rise of liberation theology. Dussel’s later History of the Church in Latin America continued the same emphases. Given that Alan Neely (the author of a PhD thesis on Protestant theologies of liberation discussed in chapter two) translated, edited, and revised History of the Church in Latin America, the absence of Protestant theologies of liberation is perhaps more surprising. The best work on the history of liberation theology remains that of sociologist Christian Smith and his The Emergence of Liberation Theology. Yet even as Smith broke significant new ground in charting early Protestant contributions to the theology of liberation, his focus was narrower. He wrote, “I will pay attention to the role of Protestants in the emergence of the liberation theology movement only insofar as it relates to understanding that emergence within the Catholic Church.”

David Tombs’ Latin American Liberation Theology (2002) is a significant contribution to the history of theologies of liberation, especially with regard to the social and political context that gave rise to it. Yet,

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99 This book was originally six lectures delivered at the Latin American Pastoral Institute in Quito, the Liturgical Institute in Medellin, and in Buenos Aires. They were then published under the title Caminos de liberación Latinoamericana I: Interpretación de nuestro continente Latinoamericano.

100 Enrique D. Dussel, History and the Theology of Liberation: A Latin American Perspective (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976), especially 140-142.


103 Ibid., 5.
Tombs relegated Protestant movements such as the Iglesia y Sociedad en Amérlica Latina (Church and Society in Latin America or ISAL) program within the World Council of Churches to a footnote. Tombs then argued that Protestant theologies of liberation arose only when they “became linked to the currents” of Roman Catholic liberation theologians Gustavo Gutiérrez and Juan Luis Segundo. This discussion also appeared only in a footnote, which reflects the author’s view of its importance. The work made brief mention of Rubem Alves and Míguez Bonino. Alfred T. Hennelly’s Liberation Theology: A Documentary History and Joel Cruz’s The Histories of the Latin American Church are also reflective of this broader story that relegates Protestantism to the margins of the history of theologies of liberation.

There remains, therefore, a significant gap in the scholarly literature on the history of Latin American social theologies with regard to Protestant contributions. Were they simply derivative of earlier Roman Catholic theologies, or were they independent but overlapping contributions?

1.3. Context and Questions: Academic Contribution

By focusing on the life, work, and context of René Padilla, this thesis will provide the interpretive tools necessary for understanding the origins, development, and dissemination of integral mission. Similarly, it will seek to answer key questions raised by this data. Careful attention to overlooked personal papers, archival

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105 Ibid., 85.

106 Ibid., 112.

documents, and oral history will shed new light on this important story. First, this thesis seeks to answer the question of who was the primary mind behind integral mission. While this point may be obvious given the title of the thesis, the present researcher entered the project with an open mind, attempting to allow the data to drive the conclusion. How might analyzing the content of the early Latin American Theological Fraternity gatherings shed new light on Padilla’s closest conversation partners? This question is especially pertinent regarding Padilla’s own theological development and its implications for the content and direction of this influential Latin American Protestant evangelical theological think tank. This thesis will also seek to uncover the intellectual origins of integral mission from within Padilla’s theological journey—from the missionary-influenced Latin American Protestant context, to Wheaton College, the University of Manchester, and work within the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

Padilla’s PhD thesis itself will also receive its first sustained investigation in this study. What did his sustained study of and engagement with evangelical theologies of the Kingdom while in Manchester provide to the development of integral mission?

Carefully interrogating archival documents and Spanish resources will also illuminate Padilla’s conversation partners in the early development of integral mission. Padilla’s friendship with Míguez Bonino will receive its first sustained treatment here. The thesis will also briefly touch on Míguez Bonino’s increasing identification with evangelicalism, to the point in the 1990s when he began to self-identify as an evangélico within the context of his increasing dialogue with the FTL. Where, how and why did the former Regional President for the World Council of Churches locate his deepest friendships within the Latin American Protestant
evangelical community later in life? Finally, to what extent did Padilla stimulate a wider emphasis on holistic themes within evangelical Protestantism? To what extent has wider evangelicalism embraced this turn itself? By answering these important questions, this thesis hopes to break significant ground.

1.4. Main Terms:

David Bebbington’s fourfold definition of evangelicalism is widely accepted as the most accurate definition of the movement: conversionism, biblicism, crucicentrism, and activism. In my language study, relief work, and fieldwork in several, regionally diverse Latin American countries, Bebbington’s quadrilateral accurately assesses the unifying principles of the diverse movement. Thomas Kidd has argued for the need for including the Holy Spirit in the definition. Yet, within Latin American evangelicalism, widespread disagreement over the Holy Spirit may be more characteristic than a unifying agreement—especially between Pentecostal and missionary-influenced dispensational and cessationist churches. This thesis will also speak of “progressive” evangelicals. By this, I follow Brantley Gasaway in describing those who have a “foundational commitment to social, economic, and political reforms to injustices and inequalities.” In Latin America, the term evangélico has historically meant “Protestant”—especially prior to the

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108 Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s, 2-3.


110 This point was raised by David Bebbington in response to Kidd’s paper at the American Society of Church History, Washington D.C., January 2014. See Fides et Historia 47:1, (Winter/Spring, 2015).

fundamentalist-neo-evangelical split. In the last sixty years, however, it has carried multiple meanings, tied to historical developments within Latin America.

With the new and more conservative associations that the term “evangelical” acquired within neo-evangelical circles in the United States from the 1940s, Protestant missionaries in Latin America (who were primarily North American) introduced the term evangélico as a translation of “evangelical.” Within popular usage, individuals in Protestant communities continue to self-identify as evangélico and not evangelical. In this work, the main players have self-identified as both evangelical and evangélico—thus, the English term will be utilized to avoid confusion.

The idea behind Padilla’s term misión integral came from his homemade, whole-wheat bread called pan integral. Padilla made the bread in his modest Buenos Aires home during the present researcher’s fieldwork in Vicente López Partido, Florida barrio in the northern suburbs of Buenos Aires. The Spanish word integral brings connotations of whole-wheat, comprehensive, total, complete, as well as of integrity. It contains nuances of the English word “holistic” yet Spanish contains the word holístico. Due in part to the lack of a direct English gloss, Padilla translated the term inconsistently over the first two decades of the term. For example, what appears to have been the first public usage of misión integral at Lausanne 1974 was


translated “comprehensive mission.” Padilla then used the term “fullness of mission” in August 1978 in a paper given at the Fourth Conference of the International Association for Mission Studies in Maryknoll, New York—eventually published as a chapter in his 1985 book *Mission Between the Times* under the same English title. Yet, when this paper was translated into Spanish for Padilla’s 1986 publication *Misión Integral*, the chapter “Fullness of Mission” was entitled “Misión Integral.” In *Mission Between the Times*, Padilla inconsistently translated the term. In the 2010 second edition, Padilla added a chapter entitled “From Lausanne I to Lausanne III” where he utilized the English phrase integral mission freely. Yet, Padilla fluctuated between the phrase “wholeness of mission” and “integral mission” even on the same page. In order to avoid anachronistic usage, this thesis will utilize the phrase *misión integral* when discussing the period within which this translational flux occurred—which is from its emergence in the early 1970s until the 1990s.

All interviews were conducted in the native language of participants and translated by the author. Owing to the bilingual writing of many of the major players, translated “comprehensive mission.”

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118 Ibid., 13.
care was taken to reflect the English word choice of authors in translation if at all possible. For example, if Padilla chose an English translation of a Spanish phrase or word, Padilla’s choice will be considered for his quotations. All English translations will be carefully examined for accuracy.

1.5. Methodology:

This work relies heavily on oral historical accounts, archival documents, and primary Spanish-language resources. The researcher is aware of the methodological challenge of relying on individuals’ memory of events and the tendency toward retrospective interpretation. Care was taken to interrogate critically oral historical accounts and compared them with archival evidence, especially accounts with a wide chronological gap between the event and the retelling. The archival record will be the control, checking the results of oral interviews against it. For example, there are points in the thesis where Padilla’s recollection is corrected. The primary tools for reconstructing this story are Spanish-language primary sources, correspondence between the main players, and other archival documents including financial records. These records will be examined in chapter six where Padilla became embroiled in a controversy over the doctrine of inerrancy. The central location for these documents was the Billy Graham Center Archives in Wheaton, Illinois. The present researcher spent over four weeks in Wheaton on five research trips, working primarily on the following collections: the papers of the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelism, the Paul Little Papers, Charles Henry Troutman Papers, Peter Wagner Papers, Carlos Rene Padilla Papers, Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship Records, John R. W. Stott
Collection, Latin America Mission Records, and interviews with Nancy Duarte-Gomez (tape 3), Scott Nyberg, and Wayne G. Bragg.\textsuperscript{119}

Other helpful archival collections were utilized, including the records of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students housed at its headquarters in Oxford. This collection contained one box, containing mostly records of \textit{Certeza} magazine and a few important pieces of correspondence—including between Padilla and the second IVF General Secretary Oliver Barclay. Thirdly, the John Stott Papers at Lambeth Palace Library provided especially helpful observations from John Stott’s diary. This included Stott’s record of camping with the Padilla family in Argentina and preaching with Padilla in Latin America in the early 1970s, as well as of important meetings such as the Continuation Committee Meeting of Lausanne in Mexico City, 1975. The archives at Yale Divinity School contained an interesting window into student movements of a more liberal stamp than IFES, notably the Student Christian Movement and the World Student Christian Federation. The Divinity School also possesses a significant collection of \textit{Misión} magazine, which Padilla founded and edited. The Carl Henry Papers at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School provided various interesting documents with relation to Carl Henry’s trip to Latin America in 1972. Particularly helpful was box 5, folder 26, which included his personal notes and letters from Padilla. I also explored the Evangelical Union of South America (Latin Link) archives held at the University of Edinburgh, Centre for the Study of World Christianity. This provided context for Peruvian-born British missionary Peter Savage’s influential work with the Latin American Theological Fraternity.

\textsuperscript{119} http://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/archhp1.html
Finally, the personal papers of René Padilla in Buenos Aires, and those of Samuel Escobar in Valencia were invaluable resources. Both Padilla and Escobar provided unrestricted access to personal correspondence, early Spanish publications (such as those of the FTL), and various documents. Escobar’s papers in particular contained hundreds of personal letters—mostly between Padilla, Escobar, Costas, Savage, Arana, and Stacey Woods. These mainly focused on the day-to-day business end of student work with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students. These also shed light on differences between Padilla and Escobar, including attitudes toward money—which play a role in Padilla remaining in Latin America and Escobar taking a professorship in the USA. Escobar’s personal papers also provide details regarding competition between student missionary organizations within the new religious economy of Latin America. These include Campus Crusade for Christ, Latin American Mission, Navigators, and IFES. In this, they provide a window into the unique relationship between Woods and his Latin American staff workers—including their increasing independence and contextualization. The latter is significant because very few of Woods’ letters survive today. Padilla’s papers provided important rare early publications from the Latin American Theological Fraternity, the entire collection of Certeza and Misión magazine, along with other important correspondence. These personal papers, along with archives listed above, provided essential documentation with which this thesis recreated the story.

1.6. Outline of Chapters:

Chapter two will describe the social, intellectual and theological environment of the post-war period in Latin America by focusing upon the theme of dependency, both economic and theological, and in this light will examine the ambiguous relationship of Protestants to theologies of liberation. It raises critical questions
regarding the continuity and discontinuity between Latin American social theologies. Chapter three examines the shared political and social stimuli of the revolutionary Latin American university environment and its influence on Padilla. Chapter four investigates the various sources of Padilla’s theology from his time at Wheaton College, and the University of Manchester; it examines the missionary-influenced Latin American Protestant landscape, and also explores the influence of his closest colleague and wife Catharine Feser Padilla. Chapter five considers Padilla’s role in the formation and subsequent history of the *Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana* or Latin American Theological Fraternity (FTL). It pays particular attention to Padilla’s role in contrast to that of colleagues Samuel Escobar and Orlando Costas—placing the themes of early gatherings in conversation with Padilla’s own theological development. Chapter six investigates the supposed division between ecumenical and evangelical strands of Protestant Christianity in Latin America, as represented organizationally by the World Council of Churches on the one hand and the Latin American Theological Fraternity on the other, and interpersonally by Padilla and Argentine Methodist José Míguez Bonino. In doing so, it challenges widely held assumptions regarding the supposed polarization between these two religious communities. Finally, chapter seven will provide an assessment of the nature of Padilla’s influence upon the growing acceptance of integral mission within global evangelicalism. In doing so, it will pay particular attention to his role in widening evangelical Protestant discourse while influencing key evangelical leaders and organizations in the process. It will examine Padilla’s influence within traditional Western missionary structures, on personal friends such as John Stott, and upon wider organizational networks such as the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT), and the Micah Network. It also provides an assessment of
the acceptance of and resistance toward integral mission themes in evangelical mission and relief organizations, as well as churches. The reception of integral mission remains complex and is a subject that deserves further analysis.
Part One
The Historical Context and Social Origins of *Misión Integral*
Chapter Two

The Historical Context of Misión Integral: Latin American Christianity and Theories of Dependence

In 1948, the Economic Commission for Latin America (Comisión Económico para América Latina or CEPAL) was established with United Nations funding in Santiago, Chile. At the time, economic theories of development predominated—popularized by works such as American economist W. W. Rostow’s The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto. Rostow’s analysis was based on the British economy, and laid out five stages of economic development that underdeveloped countries could be expected to follow. Yet, as the export boom of 1940s waned, and Latin American dependence on development loans and aid packages increased—especially from the United States—many Latin American economies continued to languish at the lower rungs of the economic ladder. By the mid-1960s, many economists in both North America and Latin America began to question economic theories of development in favor of dependency theory—a theory championed by Argentine economist Raúl Prebisch at the UN-backed CEPAL.  

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3 German economist Hans Singer also championed this theory at the same time. See also Alan P. Neely, "Protestant Antecedents of the Latin American Theology of Liberation" (PhD Diss., The American University, 1977). For its
Dependency theory argued that Latin America did not simply lag behind Western countries in terms of economic development, but suffered from an unjust system that channeled resources from peripheral, poor nations to core, wealthy economies. Dependency theory also created an ideological unity and shared suspicion of Western efforts, funding, and ideology among a politically conscious theological elite in the Global South.\(^4\) What Latin America needed, then, was not development within the world economy but liberation from the world economic status quo. Recent historiography has shed light on the use of development as a “weapon in the ideological combat that was the Cold War” to “secure and extend an American-dominated liberal order.”\(^5\) As David Ekbladh wrote, “Modernization is deeply implicated in what has been more aptly described as the establishment of American global hegemony.”\(^6\) While this modernizing project was not specific only to the United States, in Latin America’s case the US played an outsized role.\(^7\)

In the early post-war period, many Latin American Protestant evangelical communities were dependent on the importation of North American money, personnel, and theologies. This paternalistic context was certainly not unique to Latin America—dependence and independence in the field of religion is a theme that could be explored in diverse locales. But awakenings that took place within the

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\(^6\) Ibid., 2.

\(^7\) Ibid., 3.
conservative Protestant evangelical community in Latin America would increasingly influence the tone of global Christian dialogue and trends. For the first time in Latin American history, in the 1950s Protestantism began to make significant inroads into a Catholic religious culture as urbanization provided a new social context for religious life. As the previous chapter briefly mentioned, Protestant churches found acceptance at the margins of this new urban environment, growing in places traditional Roman Catholic structures largely struggled to reach. Challenges for the Roman Catholic hierarchy only increased as the post-war period commenced—communist advances, antipathy of widespread military regimes, Protestant conversions, and the apparently superficial character of the religious commitment of the masses. Within this context, Catholic members of the intellectual elite began to formulate a new reading of theology, forged within the revolutionary Latin American environment, and drawing deeply from transnational intellectual trends. For Protestant evangelicals, new readings of theology took place in an unlikely and overlooked context.

This chapter will explore the intellectual climate that gave rise to new social theologies that challenged widespread dependence on imported Western theologies. The themes of this chapter are structured concentrically, progressively moving toward the center—which, in this study, is the Protestant evangelical context, René Padilla, and misión integral. In doing so, this chapter seeks to provide a diverse picture of the surrounding intellectual climate of post-war Latin America. Thus, it moves from the field of education to economics, explores the interface of theologies of liberation between European political theology, the rise of Protestant theologies of liberation, the Rebirth of Latin American Christianity, 96, 99.

See also chapter one, p. 16.
and finally Padilla’s engagement with his contemporary Latin American theological climate. By doing so, this chapter will also provide nuance to a discussion that is often framed as an exclusively Catholic monologue: the rise of social theologies in the context of emerging dependency theories. Parallel Protestant social theological trends have been widely overlooked—trends which overlapped with Catholic developments in significant ways.

**2.1. Conscientizing Latin America: Paulo Freire and Catholic Theologies of Liberation**

After the Cuban Revolution of 1959, in which the democratically elected Cuban president-turned dictator Fulgencio Batista was overthrown by forces loyal to Fidel Castro, the Argentine doctor Ernesto Che Guevara promised to export Marxist revolution throughout Latin America. Yet, instead of a leftist, Marxist revolution, nearly every Latin American country received repressive military regimes within the next decade. Brazil was no exception. In 1964 a military coup d’état deposed the leftist president João Goulart. The military government began targeting perceived threats, which included prominent university intellectuals. Thus, the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire fled to nearby Chile. Freire had been carrying out his *Movimento de Educação de Base* (MEB, Base Education Movement), a massive literary project to “conscientize” the poor into political awareness. The term

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11 Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela (Uruguay 1981-1985).

12 Recently declassified documents reveal the U.S. supported the coup, and stood ready with supplies in the event of a civil war (which never came). The actual extent of American intervention remains unclear, as the majority of documents remain classified.
conscientization came from the Portuguese conscientização, meaning “to perceive
social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the
oppressive elements of reality.”¹³ He later wrote his influential Pedagogy of the
Oppressed, where he decried the dependence of the poor on an unjust system—one
marked by widespread illiteracy and educational inequality.¹⁴ The Chilean priest
Sergio Torres later recalled the influence of Brazilian exiles in Chile, and how Freire
spread the concept of conscientization at the University of Santiago.¹⁵ Ironically,
Freire’s exile in Chile served to spread his ideas rather than to contain them.¹⁶
Freire’s ideas were adopted not only in the area of education, but also in religion—
perhaps most prominently in Latin American theologies of liberation.

The post-war period brought a tide of revolutionary thinking that ebbed and
flowed often through transnational channels emanating from universities. To capture
the revolutionary ethos, the Brazilian Presbyterian theologian Rubem Alves (1933-
2014) wrote his doctoral dissertation entitled “Toward a Theology of Liberation” at
Princeton Theological Seminary in 1969—probably the first use of the phrase
“theology of liberation.”¹⁷ This same year, the Peruvian Dominican priest Gustavo
Gutiérrez (who is widely considered the “father of liberation theology”) lectured on
liberation themes in Lima—lectures that were later published under the title A
Theology of Liberation (Teología de liberación) in 1971. Gutiérrez and Alves gave a

¹³ Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, ed. trans. Myra Bergman Ramos

¹⁴ Ibid., 47, 59, 63-64.

¹⁵ Smith, The Emergence of Liberation Theology, 115.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 176.
distinctively theological voice to the growing awareness of the chronic dependency of Latin America. The documents of the Second Vatican Council, such as *Gaudium et Spes*, and Pope Paul VI’s encyclical *Populorum progressio* of 1967 drove a wider shift toward the poor, alongside a call for liberation from oppression and dependency.\(^\text{18}\) *Populorum progressio* decried the selfish and exploitative components of capitalism. In 1968, the Second General Conference of Latin American Bishops (CELAM) met in Medellín, Colombia, to discuss the implications of Vatican II for Latin America—and what would later be termed God’s “preferential option for the poor.” CELAM bishops also provided a blistering indictment of the economic dependency of Latin America, the injustice of the current economic system, and a call for conscientization of the masses. The bishops wrote, “Many of our workers, although they gradually become conscious of the necessity for…change, simultaneously experience a situation of dependency on inhuman economic systems and institutions.”\(^\text{19}\) Thus, “We must awaken the social conscience and communal customs…this task of conscientization and social education ought to be integrated into joint pastoral action at various levels.”\(^\text{20}\) Catholic social thinking at this time drew deeply from wells dug within the field of education and economics, where emerging thinking questioned structural inequality and the dependence of the poor.


\(^{20}\) Ibid., 103. For more on these documents and dependency, see Hartch, *The Rebirth of Latin American Christianity*, 62-63.
This intersection of economics and Christianity deserves further exploration owing to the widespread influence of economic theories of dependence.

2.2. Theologies of Liberation and Economic Theories of Dependence

Liberation theologians found critical continuity in these economic theories, which gained traction around the world. Within the Protestant world, no liberation theologian had more influence in the emerging Latin American theologies than the Argentine Methodist José Míguez Bonino. José Míguez Bonino (1924-2012) is widely known as the most influential Protestant liberation theologian and “the dean of Protestant Latin American theologians.” He was born in Rosario de Santa Fe, Argentina, in 1924. Like many liberation theologians, Bonino left Latin America to study in the West—first studying at the Evangelical School of Theology in Buenos Aires (where he later became a professor), then Candler School of Theology (Emory University) in Atlanta, Georgia, and Union Theological Seminary, New York, for his doctorate (ThD, 1960). Míguez Bonino is perhaps most well known as the only Latin American Protestant observer at the Second Vatican Council from 1962 to 1965. He often participated in Roman Catholic gatherings, such as the decade-long Catholic Inter-American Cooperation Program (CICOP) from 1964 to 1973, alongside Gustavo Gutiérrez and Juan Luis Segundo. Míguez Bonino exerted impressive influence at CICOP, for example, as a plenary speaker in 1967 in Boston, Massachusetts, where

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over 3,000 participants attended. That year, Míguez Bonino was visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York—though the spring semester was interrupted by student strikes. Míguez Bonino became regional president of the World Council of Churches (WCC) from 1975 to 1983, after being intimately involved in the WCC discussion forum entitled “Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina” (ISAL). ISAL, under Míguez Bonino’s shared leadership, exercised an incalculable influence on the rise of liberation theology. His books Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation (1975) and Toward a Christian Political Ethics (1983) are also widely considered core liberation theology texts. Míguez Bonino’s contribution to liberation theology was complex. He both deepened its Christian character and widened its dialogue with Marxism. Thus, he has been described as a “participant-critic” of the movement. In his most famous work Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation, Míguez Bonino grounded his theology of liberation within dependency theory, arguing, “The basic categories for understanding our history [in Latin America] are not development and underdevelopment but domination and dependence. This is the crux of the matter.” He also saw a causal relationship


25 This will be further discussed below on pp. 67-68.

26 Smith, The Emergence of Liberation Theology. The rise of ISAL and Protestant theologies of liberation will be explored further below.

27 Davies, Faith Seeking Effectiveness, 3.

28 Ibid.

between North American development and Latin American underdevelopment. The Peruvian Dominican priest Gustavo Gutiérrez also championed dependency theory in a chapter of *A Theology of Liberation* entitled “Liberation and Development”, grounding his thinking in a rejection of the development model. Gutiérrez heavily cited French economists, indicating reliance on his studies in France and French-speaking Belgium. Liberation theologians grounded their theologies within wider economic theories that were increasingly influential at the time. Careful attention to the sources of liberation theology reveals significant building upon European intellectual foundations. As Míguez Bonino himself admitted, “[Liberation theology]…has not developed in isolation. It builds on the biblical and theological renewal in Europe and the U. S. A., both in the Roman and in the Protestant churches.”

Latin American liberation theologians found critical continuity with economic theories of dependence. To use the language of Freire, they sought to conscientize Latin Americans to their location within a system of oppression that was both economic and theological in nature. This section also reveals significant transnational influence on Latin American theologies from economic theories. The extent of transnational influence upon liberation theology remains complex, though careful

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30 Ibid.


32 See ibid., 37-38. It is worth noting that Gutiérrez has since rejected the wholesale efficacy of dependency theory. See Smith, *The Emergence of Liberation Theology*, 230.

attention to the field of economics reveals significant intellectual exchange. The path to theological independence was shared with diverse communities and traditions. As liberation theologians sought to awaken Latin Americans to economic and religious freedom, the journey was not uncontested.

2.3. Theologies of Liberation and European Political Theology: Dependence or Independence?

Opposition to liberation theology from the Catholic hierarchy has been well documented. Perhaps its most famous critic was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI) in his March 1984 denunciation entitled “liberation theology.”34 Lesser known is the opposition from European political theologians, who questioned the actual independence of these emerging theologies by drawing attention to their dependence on prior theological traditions in the West. Focusing on this historical interaction will clarify the intellectual climate from which these social theologies arose. Similarly, it raises important questions regarding who decides what Latin American theology is, and whether its content is truly original to the Latin American context. When Padilla enters our conversation below, it will become clear that Protestant evangelicals were not the only Protestants who were critical of theologies of liberation.

In 1958, Míguez Bonino traveled to the United States for doctoral studies at Union Theological Seminary in New York, the oldest independent seminary in the USA, and a center for radical theology (professors have included Black liberation theologian James Cone, Christian existentialist Paul Tillich, among others).35 Míguez


35 Union was founded by the Presbyterian Church in the USA in 1836, but became independent from the PC-USA in 1893.
Bonino’s thesis was entitled “A Study of Some Recent Roman Catholic and Protestant Thought on the Relation of Scripture and Tradition” and was completed in 1960. He received at Union a foundation in contemporary European theology.  

While Gutiérrez, Segundo, Brazilian Roman Catholic theologian Hugo Assman, and Míguez Bonino were all educated within this school of European political theology, they viewed liberation theology as a truly Latin American theology, thoroughly emancipated from Western intellectual hegemony.

Gutiérrez studied for nearly a decade at Catholic universities in Belgium (where he also met the Uruguayan Jesuit priest Juan Luis Segundo) and France. In his pioneering work, *A Theology of Liberation*, Gutiérrez sought to explain the difference between liberation theology and European political theology by targeting the German Roman Catholic theologian Johann Metz. Gutiérrez’s critique of Metz’s political theology (a critique that can be applied to wider European political theology) was threefold: first, Gutiérrez argued that Metz’s social location and position of power meant that “he cannot penetrate the situation of dependency, injustice, and exploitation [sic]” that was so widespread in Latin America. Second, Metz’s analysis was too abstract, and erred in its neglect of certain Marxist social scientific analyses.

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37 These were the Catholic University of Louvain from 1951 to 1955 and the Catholic Institute of Lyon (1955-1959), where he later completed his doctorate.

38 For more on Metz’s political theology, see Neely, "Liberation Theology in Latin America: Antecedents and Autochthony," 254-256.

Third, for Gutiérrez, Metz’s supposed “privatization” of the faith failed to take into consideration the public dimension of Christianity in Latin America.\textsuperscript{40}

Despite Gutiérrez’s criticisms of Metz, the German Reformed theologian Jürgen Moltmann, himself a former student of Karl Barth, was unconvinced of the case for the indigeneity of liberation theology. On 29 March, 1976, Moltmann penned “On Latin American Liberation Theology: An Open Letter to José Míguez Bonino,” in response to Míguez Bonino’s influential 1975 work \textit{Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation}. Moltmann questioned liberation theology’s claim to indigeneity and its rejection of a European and North American intellectual inheritance.\textsuperscript{41} Moltmann charged liberation theologians with an “ideological re-import” of Marx and Friedrich Engel—reminding them that these were European, and not “Latin American discoveries.”\textsuperscript{42} Moltmann incisively moved from Alves, to Segundo, to Gutiérrez and finally back to Míguez Bonino, arguing for their indebtedness not only to his work but also to the entire corpus of European political theology—including Bonhoeffer (whom Moltmann accuses them of not having read thoroughly).

Moltmann also demonstrated where Míguez Bonino had both plagiarized verbatim quotations from Moltmann and Metz and named the theologians as errant \textit{in the same paragraph}.\textsuperscript{43} Specifically, Moltmann argued that the guiding principle of liberation theology, “Orthopraxis, rather than orthodoxy, becomes the criterion for theology” was “a literal quote from Metz.” Moltmann concluded that in liberation

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 224-225.


\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 58.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 60.
theology, “One can read all of this in Bonhoeffer, Barth, Gollwitzer, Metz, and other Europeans. One is, therefore, inclined to agree fervently with you, but then ask what sense your criticism has after all.” And finally, Moltmann concluded, “Gutiérrez has written an invaluable contribution to European theology. But where is the Latin America in it all?” Ultimately, Míguez Bonino chose not to respond to Moltmann directly. Instead, a small group of liberation theologians wrote a series of articles in 1976 to expound their position and to engage Moltmann indirectly.

Moltmann raised critical questions regarding liberation theology’s claim to indigeneity, arguing for its transnational indebtedness to European political theology. The fact that Moltmann chose to address his letter to Míguez Bonino also spoke to the prominence of Protestants within the movement of Latin American liberation theology—a reality not widely reflected in current historiography. More importantly, however, this historical interaction reveals that the path toward the emergence of contextual Latin American theology was a contested one within the Protestant community, and not simply within Catholicism. Míguez Bonino’s influence upon liberation theology can be traced back to the early post-war period, as trends within Protestant social theology reacted to both overlapping and divergent trends. This shared context provoked Protestant evangelicals and liberation theologians to rethink traditional Western Christian theologies.

2.4. Mainline Latin American Protestantism, Liberation Theology, and the Battle for Christian Mission

Latin America became a battleground for the soul of Christian mission in the 1960s. David Bosch noted two strands that were present within world Christianity in


45 Davies, Faith Seeking Effectiveness, 29.
the early 1960s: “An almost complete identification of the church with the world and its agenda, or, in extreme cases, a virtually complete writing off of the church.”

Ultimately, “ecumenical missiology turned to the world as the crucial locus for mission.” Historic denominations, especially those associated with the World Council of Churches, increasingly moved away from traditional Protestant mission emphases. For example, in 1968, the WCC assembly in Uppsala, Sweden, radically redefined the purpose of mission as “humanization” rather than conversion. These wider trends rattled foreign missionary structures and altered the framework of Christian work around the world. As Mark Laing has recently argued, “The post-colonial quest to reorganize and restructure missions led to the more fundamental questioning of how mission should be redefined.” After the Uppsala assembly, which Míguez Bonino attended, he was voted on to the Central Committee of the WCC as a representative of the Methodist Church in Argentina. These shifts within the WCC have been widely viewed as the result of pressure from Southern Christians upon traditional Western structures. The reality on the ground, however, was influence of a multidirectional and transnational kind.

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46 Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 382.

47 Santiago-Vendrell, *Contextual Theology and Revolutionary Transformation*, 88.

48 Churches., *The Church for Others, and the Church for the World*. For a discussion of the WCC’s document *The Church for Others*, see Laing, *From Crisis to Creation*, 208-209. These trends were already taking place in the 1950s, as well. See Yale Divinity School Archives, WSCF papers, SC 46, Box 284, Folder 2693 “Report on Leadership Training Course Cochabamba, Bolivia. Dec. 31, 1955 to Jan. 15, 1956.”

49 Laing, *From Crisis to Creation*, xiii.

50 Davies, *Faith Seeking Effectiveness*, 22.
Protestant theologies of liberation flowed through the pipeline of organizations such as the World Council of Churches, the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF) and its national Student Christian Movement (SCM) affiliates. The Presbyterian missionary to Colombia and Brazil, Richard Shaull, subsequently a professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, exercised immense influence on the rise of Protestant liberation theology through these organizations in Latin America. In the early 1950s, as Shaull transitioned from ministry in Colombia to Brazil, his thinking also began to shift—a transition signaled in his work *Encounter with Revolution* (1955). He had become convinced that Latin Americans needed to be awoken from their theological slumber to produce their own contextual theologies—and to achieve holistic liberation. Shaull’s ‘conversion’ to the Latin American context had profound implications for the WCC and the later contours of liberation theology.

Alan Neely concluded, “It is doubtful if any theologian has more consistently and directly contributed to the shaping of the thought of the

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51 The Spanish acronym of WSCF is FUMEC—Federación Universal de Movimientos Estudiantiles Cristianos. The SCM is known as MEC—Movimiento Estudiantil Cristiano.


54 For more on Shaull’s theological contribution within student movements in Latin America, see Angel Daniel Santiago-Vendrell, *Contextual Theology and Revolutionary Transformation in Latin America: the Missiology of M. Richard Shaull* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2010), 67-76. For more on his theological influence on the WCC and liberation theology, see pp. 74-107.
contemporary Protestant theologies of liberation than Richard Shaull".  

When the WCC began organizing conferences in the mid-1950s in Latin America, Shaull invited individuals with whom he had worked in the SCM in Latin America—students José Míguez Bonino, Rubem Alves, Julio de Santa Ana, among others.  

In 1955 the WCC inaugurated a ten-year conference series called “Christian Responsibility Toward Areas of Rapid Social Change.” Míguez Bonino had just returned from studies in Europe and the United States. After a preparatory meeting in July 1961, a discussion forum titled “Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina” (ISAL) was formed through the influence of Míguez Bonino, along with Shaull, Alves and others.  

ISAL was geared toward stimulating conversation of a quite radical nature on the growing unrest provoked by socioeconomic stratification in the Latin American context. The SCM groups, under Shaull’s leadership, were “ideological incubators” for the future leaders of ISAL, and a “veritable pipeline” for the dissemination of WCC sociopolitical themes, which included “concepts clearly related to the theologies of liberation.” Thus, “by early 1964, ISAL was arguing that social change in Latin America demanded participation in revolution” and by late

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56 Julio de Santa Ana was another influential early Protestant liberation theologian from the Methodist tradition. Smith, The Emergence of Liberation Theology, 117.  


the same year, “revolution had become almost a monochord in ISAL publications.”

For example, Shaull’s 1966 plenary speech in El Tabo, Chile, entitled “Social Justice and the Latin Churches”, called for the liberation of Latin American theology. In this way, Shaull can be considered an early liberation theologian—one who opened channels for national Latin American leadership within these historic Protestant organizations.

The effort to conscientize Latin American Christians was a diverse effort of both Protestants and Catholics. The intellectual climate drew upon transnational influences within the field of economics, political theology, and historic denominational organizations. This was the environment within which Padilla began to question the importation of Protestant evangelical theologies into Latin America. A recognition of these wider trends will also guard us against overemphasizing Padilla’s uniqueness, and enable us to place his later influence within a framework of a multiplicity of interlocutors. Chapter three will explore Padilla’s writing within this shared sociopolitical and religious environment. Here, we are concerned with the questions, “To what extent was Padilla aware of these wider social theological trends?” and “How did Padilla begin to question the widespread importation of theologies from the North?” Secondarily, “What was his early response to liberation theology?” This chapter will now turn to addressing these issues.

2.5. Conscientizing Conservative Evangelicalism: René Padilla and Misión Integral


Padilla’s positioning in the Protestant evangelical student movement within Latin America connected him to wider intellectual trends within Latin American Christianity. Samuel Escobar’s recollection of this period is that many Latin American Protestant evangelical churches and pastors were intellectually ghettoized, reading only approved books within what he called “the evangelical canon.”

Padilla’s organizational context somewhat inoculated him against the reactionary tendencies of fundamentalism, which was characteristic of much of the Latin American Protestant missionary environment. His closest influences within the leadership of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students also included members of the Christian Brethren tradition, who often sought to distance themselves from these emphases and from North American paternalism. Alec Clifford, the son of British Brethren missionaries in Argentina, was a staff member with IFES and the founding editor of Certeza magazine—the Spanish-language magazine of the IFES. Escobar refers to him as a mentor and teacher of both himself and Padilla. In the 1950s, Clifford organized a robust journal-sharing program with all Protestant journals in Latin America. In Escobar’s recollection, he and Padilla sought to position themselves against wider trends by reading widely, and encouraged their students to do so as well.

Escobar credited Clifford with sharing the journal articles that he received in the early years of Certeza. In 1966, Padilla described the magazine Certeza (at that time under Clifford’s editorship) as “the most important

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63 Ibid.
contribution in this field made to student witness.”64 Clifford’s own views can be seen in a scathing anonymous article written for the IFES magazine, *HIS*, in 1959 entitled “Why Latin Americans dislike some American missionaries.”65 The article described a series of cultural faux pas and offensive scenarios, concluding, “Only very godly men could stand some of these American missionaries.”66 The anonymous author described himself by saying, “I am a native of one of the South American republics”, and missionaries as coming from the “United States to civilize and Christianize us.” In fact, Paul Little’s diary identified the author as the Briton Alec Clifford.67 Escobar and Padilla clearly found in Clifford a sympathetic ear when voicing concerns—they did not have to hide their sometime anti-American attitudes. Personal letters also reveal openness and agreement with such concerns on the part of the Australian General Secretary of IFES, C. Stacey Woods.68 Padilla and other IFES Latin American student workers found agreement and empathy in their frequent opposition to North American paternalism.

During this time, Escobar was more closely connected than was Padilla to wider Latin American intellectual trends in the 1950s and early 1960s, owing in part to Padilla’s studies at both Wheaton College and at Manchester University. Padilla

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65 For more on *HIS* magazine, see A. Donald MacLeod, *C. Stacey Woods and the Evangelical Rediscovery of the University* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press Academic, 2007), 85, 121-127.


67 Paul Little was a staff worker with InterVarsity-USA and later associate professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Program Director of Lausanne 1974. BGCA, Collection 300, Box 139, Folder 36, Paul Little Diary 4 June 1959.

68 See further chapter three, p. 94-95 and chapter six, pp. 168-173.
wrote nothing on the sociopolitical context or social theologies arising from Latin America during this period. While Padilla was living in England, he did not appear to have been aware of the rise of ISAL or of radical trends in Protestant Christian mission. Padilla did not write on ISAL or liberation theology until North American evangelicals increasingly turned their attention to Latin America—a trend signaled by the 1969 CLADE conference organized and planned by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.\textsuperscript{69} Yet, when Padilla returned to Latin America in July 1959 he began to be called on by conservative evangelicals—including \textit{Christianity Today}, the flagship conservative evangelical magazine founded by Billy Graham—in order to respond to trends such as liberation theology.

Padilla began writing for the IFES in 1962, but his first reference to the political situation of Latin America was not until 1966 in an article entitled “Student Witness in Latin America Today”—translated the next year for the journal of the Latin American Mission \textit{Pensamiento Cristiano}.\textsuperscript{70} In his 1966 article, Padilla decried “the almost complete absence of a social concern and of a realistic approach to social evils, the frequent identification of the Gospel with foreign ways of life and thinking.”\textsuperscript{71} He also clearly began to ascertain the need for social action in evangelism, writing, “We are concerned for an evangelism in which man does not abstract himself from Secular City [sic] in order to become a self-righteous bigot, but remains as man among fellow men—taking his share in the sufferings of the world,

\textsuperscript{69} See further chapter five, pp. 148-157.


actively engaged in the fight against social evils—yet ever endeavoring to take ‘every thought captive to obey Christ.’ In other words, Padilla called for the conscientization of conservative Protestant evangelicals.

Padilla also referenced significant trends within the Latin America Catholic Church. He spoke of three developments: a new attitude to the Bible, a revival of the liturgy, and “a new approach to the social problems.” He added, “For the first time in the history of the Roman church in Latin America, there is a veritable surge in the publication, distribution and study of the Scriptures, under her own auspices.” This latter “surge” Padilla described as an attempt by the Catholic hierarchy to “dispel the common notion that for Roman Catholicism God always sides with the rich over against the poor and to show in practical ways that the church not only favors change but is ready to promote it.” Padilla cited as examples “the appearance of avant-garde magazines” and “the activities of student and labor movements,” demonstrating an awareness of new developments within Catholic social teaching including the influential Latin American Episcopal Council or CELAM—though the extent of his reading at this point is unclear. Padilla’s attitude toward these new developments was clearer. Though he acknowledged that “these are undeniable signs of the church’s awareness of the demands placed upon her by the new situation” he wondered if it were simply “a change of tactics on the part of a losing party, a renewed effort to maintain whatever power the church still has and sees rapidly slipping from her hands.” Thus he concluded somewhat morbidly, “It is difficult to avoid the feeling

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74 Padilla does not provide the criteria with which he judged it as the “first time.”
that…the Roman Catholic Church is already a corpse.”  

Padilla acknowledged both a need for theological awareness and his opinion that Catholic thinking did not contain the answer to these pressing questions. Padilla’s first direct interaction with ISAL and Protestant theologies of liberation was an attempt to educate and awaken both Spanish- and English-speaking Protestant evangelicals to the dangers of ISAL. Padilla’s writing reveals that some Protestant evangelicals were also calling for conscientization in response to the “new situation,” but one that awakened Latin Americans to a reality outside of the Catholic and mainline traditions.

By 1970, Padilla’s writing had progressed from vaguely hinting at developments in ISAL and Protestant liberation theology, to addressing them head on. In 1970, Padilla wrote an article entitled “Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?” (Latin American Theology: Radical or Evangelical?). Padilla’s article was partly a response to a 1969 article by an American missionary serving with the Latin America Mission (LAM), W. Dayton Roberts. Roberts was a staff worker with LAM from 1941 to 1985 and the first General Secretary of Comunidad Latinoamericana de Ministerios Evangélicos (CLAME, Community of Latin American Evangelical Ministries), which became the umbrella organization of LAM in 1971. The bulk of Roberts’ Latin American experience was in Costa Rica—a country with a unique history in comparison to the rest of Latin America. Most importantly, Costa Rica was never ruled by a military regime, and dismantled its

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76 The English translation here reflects Padilla’s assertion in the article that his title reflected Peter Wagner’s book title. I will discuss this article in more detail on pp. 98-99, and pp. 193, 254.

military altogether in 1948. In 1969, W. Dayton Roberts had written in *Christianity Today* that “‘the [theological] left’ and ‘the right’ were not doctrinally far away from one another in Latin America.”  

In his response, Padilla bristled that this was “totally unacceptable for whoever is moderately familiar with the writings of ISAL. It’s an oversimplification of the problem and as such gives an erroneous (*errada*) impression regarding the homogeneity of the Protestant movement in our continent.”  

Padilla felt that Roberts was overlooking the theological danger of trends within the WCC, and thus misleading his audience. Instead, urged Padilla, evangelicals needed “immediately to recognize that ‘ISAL theology’ is a Latin American version of the ‘secular theology’ (read ‘anthropology’) manufactured in Europe and the United States in these last years” (parenthesis original). Similarly, “The equation of ideology (Marxism) and faith (Christianity), the erasing of the boundary between the church and the world, the sanctification of the revolution, the rejection of biblical authority—these are the strands with which the theology of ISAL is woven. It does a favor to no one, and even less to the cause of Jesus Christ, to overlook the profound differences between this theology and any other that attempts to find its source in the biblical message.” Yet, Padilla did not view ISAL as the only danger to Latin American Christianity. The article’s main focus was on refuting the continued dependence of Latin American Protestant evangelicalism upon

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80 Padilla, "Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?," 133.

81 Ibid.
imported theology from the North—as manifested by the attempt by the North American missionary to Bolivia, C. Peter Wagner, to provide a contextual Latin American missiology for the region.82

In 1973, Padilla wrote the first article dedicated to liberation theology to appear in Christianity Today.83 (His 1970 Spanish article above was also translated in 1971 for Evangelical Missions Quarterly). Harold Lindsell, the politically conservative replacement for Carl F. H. Henry at the editorial helm of Christianity Today, invited René Padilla to respond to the perceived growing threat of liberation theology and its alliance with Marxism.84 The first half of Padilla’s article addressed both Rubem Alves’ 1969 work A Theology of Human Hope and Gutiérrez’ A Theology of Liberation. The former, Padilla dismissed as esoteric and a foreign export from the United States: “It reflected problems peculiar to a technocratic society and had a ring foreign to Latin American ears. Consequently, at least in this part of the world, that first attempt of Latin American theology to pay its debt was soon forgotten.”85 In contrast, Padilla described the Spanish version of Gutiérrez’ book as “feeding the minds of a whole generation of ‘Christian revolutionaries’ in and outside Gutiérrez’ homeland.”86 For Padilla, this was both positive and negative. Negatively,

82 See further chapter five, 153-157.


84 Henry’s removal as editor of CT is well documented. See Peter Heltzel, Jesus and Justice : Evangelicals, Race, and American Politics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 83-84.

85 Padilla, "Theology of Liberation," 69.

86 Ibid.
he concluded, “The historical situation is forced into the straitjacket of a Marxist interpretation assumed to be scientific (and therefore unquestionable), and theology becomes an ideological construction based on a premise whose origin may be traced to Marx and Althusser, not to the biblical message.” In the end, “the result is an ‘ideologization’ of the faith that is entirely consistent with a Marxist philosophical framework but bears little resemblance to the Gospel of Christ.” Thus, Padilla argued that liberation theology was neither truly Latin American nor truly Christian. In this, Padilla’s critique found continuity with Moltmann’s line of questioning regarding the dependence of liberation theology upon Western political theologies.

Padilla was not only focused on Latin American conscientization. Global evangelicalism—and Western evangelicalism in general—needed to be awakened to their cultural positioning and dependence. Thus, Padilla used his evaluation of liberation theology as an attempt to awaken North Americans to their own ideological captivity. He was not content with simply providing safe cover for a North American audience, nor did he ignore the perceived pressing questions raised by the historical situation. He accused “evangelical circles” of allowing theology “to be a cover-up for an ideology marked by political conservatism and conformity to the status quo.” Thus, he concluded, “The need for a liberation of theology is then as real in our case as in the case of the theology of liberation.” The article’s final words revealed that neither theologies of liberation nor current conservative evangelical theology answered Padilla’s question: “Where is the evangelical theology that will propose a

87 Ibid., 69-70.

88 Ibid., 70.
solution with the same eloquence but also with a firmer basis in the Word of God?" 89
That lingering question would drive Padilla’s development of social theology from
the Latin American context.

2.6. Conclusion

The post-war Latin American Christian intellectual context has emerged as
both clear and complex. Interdenominational communities sought to conscientize the
masses—awakening Latin Americans to the reality of widespread dependence in both
economics and theology. This conversation was not simply a Catholic monologue,
but crossed denominational boundaries, developing transnationally. Similar to
controversies within the Roman Catholic Church, the path toward contextual
Protestant Latin American theology was contested from its origins. When Padilla was
urged to respond to liberation theology by conservative evangelicals in the North, he
used the opportunity to remind North Americans of their own political ideologies and
cultural dependence. Theories of dependence, then, transcended national, political,
educational, and religious boundaries—creating a multidirectional conversation that
would widely influence the fields it touched. René Padilla, then, began to question
widespread Latin American dependence on North American theology within a context
of emerging dependency theories. This study will now turn toward exploring his
attempt at answering this perceived ‘theological poverty’—what would become
known as misión integral—and its dependence on or independence from Latin
American theologies of liberation. We must take the investigation earlier, into the
1950s and 1960s, in order to explore dependence or independence at its origins. Did
misión integral arise as a response to liberation theology, or was it an overlapping

89 Ibid.
response to contiguous contextual challenges? This question will be the subject of chapter three.
October 2, 1968, is a date seared into the Mexican psyche. University student-led protests had been raging since August of that year, based on the campus of Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) and involving nearly 200,000 students and professors from nearly 70 educational institutions—both universities and preparatory schools. The tension only escalated as the October 1968 Olympics approached—increasing both government fears and protesters awareness of a watching world. Indeed, one of the protesters’ chants was “¡No queremos olimpiadas, queremos revolución! (We don’t want Olympics, we want revolution!)” On Wednesday, October 2, just 10 days before the Opening Ceremony, thousands of students had marched throughout Mexico City and by evening 5,000 had gathered in the de Las Tres Culturas (Plaza of the Three Cultures) in the Cuauhtémoc borough of Mexico City. Thousands of soldiers and tanks quickly surrounded the students and opened fire with machine guns, pistols, and high-powered rifles. As the smoke settled, hundreds lay dead, over a thousand wounded, and over 2,000 protesters were arrested—including most of the leadership of the Consejo Nacional Huelga (National Strike Council or CNH), the protest organizers. Latin American history contains a

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long tradition of government toleration of student radicalism. But much had changed in the preceding decade—namely the Cuban revolution, a rapid spread of repressive military regimes, and vast rural-urban migration, all of which funneled into the Latin American university context. This sociopolitical environment proved particularly salient for the development of social theologies in the second half of the twentieth century. This chapter will argue that misión integral arose from the revolutionary Latin American university environment. Thus, while Protestant evangelical and liberation theologians exchanged significant intellectual resources (as seen for example in collaboration between Padilla and Míguez Bonino) the origins of misión integral are found within shared political and social stimuli, rather than wholesale borrowing from liberation theology. The origins of misión integral and the salience of social location in the rise of Latin American Protestant evangelical social theology in the 1950s and 1960s have been overlooked or understated. By uncovering the origins and development of misión integral, this study will provide a missing historiographical link to intellectual ideas that reshaped the Protestant evangelical world—in politics, mission, and ecclesiology.

3.1. Interwar Migration and Post-war Matriculation: The Rise of the Latin American University

Careful scrutiny of Latin American census data reveals two preliminary conclusions regarding a vast post-war matriculation boom at Latin American

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3 Tombs, *Latin American Liberation Theology*, 68.

4 The best historical survey of the origins of liberation theology remains Smith, *The Emergence of Liberation Theology*. See also Tombs, *Latin American Liberation Theology*. 
universities. The first appears to be a stark, interwar increase of rural-urban migration. The second is a vast rise in matriculations within the universities themselves. In the 1930 Mexican census, Mexico City, the capital, contained nearly 961,000 inhabitants. By the next census a decade later, the city had nearly doubled in population to almost 1.5 million inhabitants. Peru recorded similar urban growth during this time. Lima city contained nearly 300,000 inhabitants, according to the November, 1931 government census. Less than a decade later, the population increased nearly twofold to over 500,000 inhabitants in 1940. This trend only continued, as Lima’s population reached over 800,000 in 1950. These countries were by no means unique within Latin America. The interwar and post-war era in Latin America led to explosive urban migration, with a rise in economic ambitions as its corollary.

These migratory and socioeconomic patterns funneled into the Latin American university. For example, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) had in 1928 an enrollment of 7,527 students, yet by 1950, this number had ballooned to


nearly 25,000. By 1960, the student population in that year had surpassed the aggregate for the entire decade of 1940-1950. Indeed, the total number of graduates between 1940 and 1950 numbered only 62,584. But in the year 1960 alone, the university contained over 70,000 students. Today UNAM has nearly 325,000 students, over 36,000 academic staff and an endowment of over 2.5 billion US dollars—a vast increase from just 7,000 students nearly a century ago.\textsuperscript{11} Mexican universities certainly were not alone in this vast increase—indeed it was universal in Latin America.\textsuperscript{12} The most prominent university in Peru, Universidad de San Marcos, contained 1,849 students in 1928, nearly 9,000 by 1955, and 14,000 by 1962.\textsuperscript{13}

The swelling urban populations and expanding universities ultimately stretched the cities beyond their infrastructural capacity. Vast industrialization certainly followed this widespread urbanization. Yet, while countries such as Colombia saw industrial growth in the 1930s similar to Britain in the nineteenth century, the growth tapered off after 1945.\textsuperscript{14} Indeed, industrialization and economic growth were unable to keep pace with demand for work. This story of rural-urban migration, the accompanying influx of university students, and receding economic opportunity set the stage for revolutionary action in cities around Latin America.

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\textsuperscript{14} Bushnell, The Making of Modern Colombia: a Nation in Spite of Itself, 186.
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René Padilla observed this reality in the mid-1960s and wrote a series of articles expounding his observations. In “La universidad: lo social, lo spiritual” (The university: social and spiritual) Padilla diagnosed Latin America as having a “social bottle neck”—utilizing a phrase coined by Peruvian writer Luis Alberto Sanchez. Padilla wrote, “The university has become the sore spot where the sickness of the whole organism is made evident.” Enrollment was far from a guarantee of socioeconomic improvement—graduation rates hovered around one-fourth of those who enrolled, and those who graduated faced meager job prospects. Most Latin American cities also lacked the structural framework to integrate such an increased population. The rate of urbanization was higher than the rate of industrialization—in some cases as much as twice the rate. To put it another way, “The urban process raised social aspiration levels without relieving economic pressures.” This led to widespread disillusionment, particularly among young people. The importance of


16 Padilla, "La universidad: lo social, lo spiritual." Luis Alberto Sánchez, Cuadernos no. 94, p. 27.

17 Ibid., 205.


20 Ibid., 145.

political action among university students is better understood when seen in this light. Padilla wrote:

The student strikes (which at times lead to the closing of the university for weeks and even months)…are mere manifestations of the problems that afflict the whole society…From this perspective it is possible to explain the importance that politics is given among the students…the professional agitator seeks to channel the bitterness of the oppressed into the narrow passages of a violent revolution.22

This social unrest in Latin America mirrored broader global student uprisings, such as the Paris student riots of 1968, the Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia, Vietnam War protests including the Kent State shooting of 1970, events surrounding the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, and widespread British student protests in 1968 and the years following.23 While protests raged around the world, those in Latin America were particularly violent and widespread.

In this environment, Latin American social theologies that challenged the Western theological status quo were often viewed with similar suspicion and fear. Ultimately, trends in migration and urbanization had set the stage for the rise of Protestantism, bringing new thoughts and practices that challenged traditional Latin American religion.24

3.2. A Sojourn North and the Power of Return: René Padilla at Wheaton College


23 For more on global student protests, see Lehtonen, Story of a Storm : The Ecumenical Student Movement in the Turmoil of Revolution, 1968 to 1973, 43-44. See also E.R. Norman, Christianity and World Order (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 52. For more on the rise of Third World theologies, and its impact on the missionary movement, see Stanley, Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism, 25.

24 Hartch, The Rebirth of Latin American Christianity, 12.
In August 1953, with the help of American missionaries in Ecuador, René Padilla matriculated at Wheaton College, an evangelical Christian institution in Wheaton, Illinois, known for its academic reputation. Padilla attended Wheaton from 1953 to 1959, completing his Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Philosophy and Master of Arts (MA) in Theology. During his absence from Latin America, Padilla developed some aspects of his theological methodology at the expense of others. His social questions went into hibernation, as he instead focused on conservative evangelical emphases of the time, such as the “historical-grammatical approach to hermeneutics”, which he learned from Professor A. Berkeley Mickelsen. Padilla would later describe this hermeneutical approach as “a good and necessary step, but…not enough.” At Wheaton, Padilla discovered the centrality of Christology, the importance of eschatology and “tools of exegesis” like Koine Greek and Biblical Hebrew. Questions of social theology, however, were muted by the comfortable North American suburban context.

Padilla returned to Latin America in 1959 after being appointed an IFES traveling secretary for Latin America—specifically Venezuela, Colombia, Peru and Ecuador. Padilla was often away from his family for weeks at a time, his daily life...


26 This discussion will be expanded in chapter four. See pp. 104-108.


29 Ibid.
immersed in student work on Latin American university campuses. This widespread contact with universities and students around Latin America gave him a unique perspective on the sociopolitical context. The stark contrast and jolting return threw into question his theological categories, particularly those imparted by his education at Wheaton. The Cuban Revolution had just begun, and university students pressed Christian student workers for a response to the pull of revolutionary action. Padilla immediately perceived the contextual inadequacy of Western Protestant evangelical theology: “In this [university] context I found myself lacking a social ethic. My years of studies in the United States had not prepared me for the sort of theological reflection that was urgently needed in a revolutionary situation!”

Padilla’s own discontent with existing approaches to ministry, mixed with student demand for social engagement, resulted in a unique recipe for social theology. The Latin American university campus became a laboratory for new theologies—particularly within the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

3.3. Theology Meets Revolution: Student Work at the Latin American University

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The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students was founded in August 1947 at Phillips Brooks House in Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.\footnote{Pete Lowman, \textit{The Day of His Power: A History of The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students} (Inter-Varsity Press, 1988), 79; MacLeod, \textit{C. Stacey Woods and the Evangelical Rediscovery of the University}, 251. For more on the founding of IFES, see C. Stacey Woods, \textit{The Growth of a Work of God: The Story of the Early Days of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship of the United States of America as Told by its First General Secretary} (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter-Varsity Press, 1978), 137-141.}

IFES is the worldwide representative body that arose out of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship (IVF), later known as the Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship (UCCF) in Britain, and InterVarsity Christian Fellowship-USA (IVCF). Behind IFES’ inception was the Australian evangelical leader Stacey Woods—the founding general secretary of IVCF in the USA (which would quickly become its largest and primary source of financial backing), and the first general secretary of IFES. The IVF, an organization originally based in Britain, had recently expanded into the United States in 1937 under the direction of Woods and the Canadian IVCF. Woods was uniquely positioned as an Australian to mediate the growing tension between British, American and Scandinavian approaches to ministry and organizational leadership.\footnote{Lowman, \textit{The Day of His Power: A History of The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students}, 80-81.} The rise of the evangelical Inter-Varsity movement can also be seen in contrast to the relative decline of the various national Student Christian Movements (SCM).\footnote{The SCM and IVF were both national movements within their larger parent organizations WSCF and IFES.} The founders of IVF, in particular the early chairman Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1899-1981), viewed the British SCM as incurably liberal and infected by Barthian theology, in particular.\footnote{For more on Lloyd-Jones and his role in post-war evangelicalism, see Stanley, \textit{Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism}, 48-52.} Indeed, Brian Stanley wrote, “The SCM which had nurtured the older generation of...
denominational leaders capitulated in this decade to a form of quasi-Marxist political activism that relegated prayer and Bible study to the margins, and had no place for mission in any traditional form.\textsuperscript{38} A meeting between IVF and SCM leadership in London in 1950, which SCM leaders hoped would lead to cooperation, demonstrated that the opportunity for reconciliation had long since passed.\textsuperscript{39}

In the same decade as it expanded into the USA, Stacey Woods dreamed of extending IFES’ reach southward. Woods first traveled to Latin America in April of 1937, when he and Charles Troutman, a senior missionary with Latin America Mission (LAM), and “leading figure” of the IVCF-USA movement, drove to Mexico together (Woods had an intense fear of flying).\textsuperscript{40} Woods returned to Latin America in 1944 (Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Colombia), and wrote to the board of IVCF-USA outlining his desire to see IFES begin work in Latin America.\textsuperscript{41} This dream was further encouraged by donations from students in Canada, who continued to send funds even when no plans existed—just as they did for the USA years earlier.\textsuperscript{42} In February of 1945, IVCF-USA staff worker Ed Pentecost enrolled


\textsuperscript{39} For an SCM perspective on the meeting, see Boyd, \textit{The Witness of the Student Christian Movement : Church Ahead of the Church}, 84-85. For an IFES perspective on the “death” of the SCM, see Lowman, \textit{The Day of His Power: A History of The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students}, 31-45. For more on the erosion of evangelical consensus in Britain, see Stanley, \textit{Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism}, 44-52.

\textsuperscript{40} Stanley, \textit{Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism}, 158; MacLeod, \textit{C. Stacey Woods and the Evangelical Rediscovery of the University}.


\textsuperscript{42} Ibid. Lowman, \textit{The Day of His Power: A History of The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students}, 73.
as a postgraduate student in Hispanic literature at UNAM. There, he began to initiate student Bible studies and meetings, mostly based in his home. At UNAM, he met various Mexican students who had attended “Campus-in-the-Woods” in the USA—a “veritable breeding ground” for North American Protestant evangelical leaders. The revolutionary ferment of Latin America was one of the first observations made by Western student mission leaders as IFES began expanding their ministry southward in the 1940s. Latin American universities would eventually become a hotbed of evangelical competition between IFES, LAM, and Campus Crusade for Christ (one of the largest Christian student ministries in the world). In a 1965 personal letter, Woods spoke of increased competition and warned Padilla that other organizations viewed him as “anti-missionary and anti-foreign.” Woods suggested to Padilla that he should be on his “guard regarding this.” He also clarified that he had defended Padilla against such critiques, saying that “they had misunderstood you entirely and that you are not anti-missionary per se, but that you were strongly pro-Latin America and pro-Latin.” As early as the 1960s, Padilla was noted for being antagonistic toward foreign influence within a hotly contested Latin American religious economy.

Among Latin Americans themselves, antipathy toward Protestant evangelicals, who were seen as foreign or “gringos”, increased as revolutionary

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43 Escobar, *La chispa y la llama*, 52. Campus-in-the-Woods was an evangelical camp run by IVCF Canada near the US-Canadian border. Up until the late 1960s, it was co-operated by the American and Canadian chapters. See Escobar, *La chispa y la llama*, p. 117. See also MacLeod, *C. Stacey Woods and the Evangelical Rediscovery of the University*, 91, 109, 149, 212-213.


movements exploded. Protestants often were seen as sympathizers with military regimes (domestically) or with the interests of the American government or CIA (internationally). Pentecost immediately noted the revolutionary context and violence surrounding the future-IFES chapter at UNAM: “Probably not six months have gone by in the last fifteen years when some have not been killed for being Protestants and many more burnt out of their homes.” IFES certainly was not alone in its proximity to political ferment; accounts from ecumenical Student Christian Movement (SCM) staff workers reveal striking continuity with those from IFES staff. SCM staff worker and later general secretary Valdo Gallard of Uruguay began his 1953 travel report with the story of the murder of an evangelical pastor in Guatemala. According to Gallard’s account, in late April of that year, a Roman Catholic mob burst into a church, prompted by false rumors that an ex-Roman Catholic priest was performing a Protestant service. The evangelical pastor was murdered at the front of his church. Nancy Duarte-Gomez, former IFES staff worker and Professor of Psychology at Universidad Santo Tomás, Concepción, Chile, remembered the university context in Chile in the early 1970s:

They had strikes every day...It was very tough when everything was interrupted because many students disappeared. Many, many students disappeared. As Christians, they were forbidden to have meetings. They lived a very historic moment.

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46 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September 2013.

47 His, 1948, June-September, 47. Cited in Escobar, La chispa y la llama, 51.

48 See, for example, Yale Divinity School Archives, World Christian Student Federation Papers, SC 46, Box 284, Folder 2500.

49 Yale Divinity School Archives, World Christian Student Federation Papers, SC 46, Box 284, Folder 2500.

50 BGCA, SC 521, Tape 3, “Interview with Nancy Duarte-Gomez.”
In the political realm, university students in Latin America grappled with the pull of revolutionary action, whether protest, violence or even guerilla warfare as a response to the sociopolitical unrest. In Latin America, students possessed vast political clout—both on account of the numbers described above and because of the intrinsic power of education itself. In Colombia, for example, 60% of the country was illiterate in the late 1960s. Thus university students were one of the few groups able to engage the political and particularly Marxist literature of the day. Escobar and Padilla were immersed in the same context as liberation theologians—engaging the issues raised by university students. Indeed, when the Peruvian evangelical Pedro Arana (Padilla’s successor as IFES general secretary for Latin America) was a student leader with IFES, he enrolled in “various summer courses” with fellow-Peruvian Gustavo Gutiérrez, such as his lectures delivered in July, 1968 in Chimbote, Peru. These lectures later became Gutiérrez’ masterwork *A Theology of Liberation*. In a 2013 interview, Arana said, “It was a time of enriching dialogue, discussion, and

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For more on the early years of IFES in Chile, see Escobar, *La chispa y la llama*, 77.


52 Ibid., 496.

53 Ibid. This article originally appeared in the Spanish newspaper *La Gaceta*, núm. 13, Bogotá, March-April, 1965. Translated by Morton Marks.

54 Escobar, *La chispa y la llama*, 86.

without always agreeing.” Escobar recalled Arana visiting his home after the
lectures and discussing the content. Arana and Gutiérrez became friends, even
presenting plenary papers together in 1982 at the first ecumenical conference of
Consejo Latinoamericano de Iglesias (Council of Latin American Churches or CLAI)
in Huampaní, Peru.

IFES in Latin America operated with a constant eye toward the changing
political situation. Samuel Escobar, in particular, noted the intimate connection
between revolution and theology that was apparent in 1966, the year of the death of
Catholic guerrilla priest, Camilo Torres Restrepo. The prior year, Torres made a
direct appeal to university students in Colombia to join the Marxist revolution in the
Colombian newspaper La Gaceta (The Gazette). Escobar described the
revolutionary situation that greeted IFES staff workers at Latin American universities
in the 1960s and 1970s:

Around 1966 the challenge of Marxism and of leftist nationalists in general had
stopped being only ideological and political... Guerrilla warfare as a possibility of
attaining power and transforming the world had quickly become an extremely
attractive doctrine and practice, especially in the universities. Every question
regarding violence and subversion touched, in one way or another, the field of
theology and the teaching of the Bible.

Protestant evangelicals such as Padilla and Escobar were not immune to the
pull of revolution—the questions posed by Marxism challenged the core of their

57 Samuel Escobar, interview and translated by author, Valencia, 22 October,
2013.
59 Escobar, La chispa y la llama, 86.
60 Restrepo, "Message to Students," 497-498.
61 Escobar, La chispa y la llama, 86.
theology. Samuel Escobar recalled being “tempted” as a young man by Marxist social analysis of class division and power balance; it was attractive owing to the yawning gap between the rich and poor in Peru and the obvious hegemony of the ruling class.62 René Padilla credited Ecuadorian “Marxist and atheist” high school teachers for “implant[ing]” questions of social justice and peace into his mind at a young age. Padilla himself did not see Marxism as inherently incompatible with Christian faith, but cautioned against using social-scientific analysis as an “ideological straightjacket” on the Bible—as Padilla accused some liberation theologians such as Juan Luis Segundo of doing.63 In response, Padilla turned to the writings of the Princeton theologian and writer on Latin American Christianity John A. Mackay. Rather than “vaccinating” him against Marxism, as was Escobar’s experience with Mackay, this literature catalyzed Padilla’s search for an evangelical Latin American social theology.64 Padilla reflected, “My reading of these authors affirmed in me the conviction that my total inability to articulate a Christian answer to the questions my teachers posed was due to the lack of a social dimension of the gospel I had received at home: a gospel for individual salvation by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ, and little more than that.”65 These theological questions would


only resurface years later, after hibernating during his studies in North America. Upon returning, Padilla began to explore social theology through service among the poor.

3.4. Emerging Social Theology and Negotiating New Theological Avenues: Lima 1966

In January of 1966, Samuel Escobar and René Padilla developed and carried out the first Latin American-led training course for IFES university students in Lima, Peru. This course was immensely important for the fermentation of socio-contextual theological ideas. Each afternoon, after “discipleship” and evangelism training, the students were sent into poor neighborhoods to partner with local churches in service projects—despite the initial skepticism of the IFES general secretary, C. Stacey Woods. Woods was booked as the plenary speaker, and Padilla sent him an advance itinerary for the week. René Padilla’s recollection is that Woods approved of the itinerary with one major exception—the student work in poor neighborhoods. According to Padilla, Woods responded in a letter saying, “What does this have to do with student work?” Padilla remembers his own response as, “Our interest is not just evangelizing students,” Padilla recalls writing, ”Our interest is to form disciples conscientized of their context.” Stacey Woods’ final response was a lucid reflection of his leadership style and approach to IFES national movements: “I do not quite understand what you’re doing, but you are in charge,” Padilla recalls Woods saying. After attending the program and visiting impoverished neighborhoods with the

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66 Ibid., 96.

67 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September 2013.

68 Ibid.
students in 1966, Padilla recalled Stacey Woods pulling him aside and whispering, “René—now I understand.” Padilla began shaping the ministry of IFES in Latin America around what he would later call “wider dimensions of the gospel message.” Padilla’s recollection of Woods’ comment reveals the significant theological freedom Woods gave his global general secretaries—a reality both Padilla and Escobar highlighted in personal interviews and writing.70

The curriculum content emerged from eight years of experience in Latin American universities and mirrored broader trends in Latin American Christianity, such as the Roman Catholic Church’s shift toward the poor in the mid-1960s.71 Unfortunately, historiography has, instead, credited Western leaders for the curriculum—particularly a training course led by Swiss IFES staff worker Hans Bürki in 1965 in Casa Moscia, Switzerland, which Padilla and Escobar attended. Pete Lowman, for example, mistranslated and misquoted Escobar as saying the 1966 Lima course was “something which gave form to all that we had learnt”, from Bürki and his course. Other historians have followed Lowman’s lead, as laid out in Lowman’s English work, The Day of His Power: A History of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, which relied heavily on Samuel Escobar’s work La chispa y la llama.72 Instead, Escobar wrote of the 1966 Lima course, “We had begun to articulate something that was very evangelical but also very much our own: something which

69 Ibid.


71 Escobar, La chispa y la llama, 81. On the Roman Catholic Church, see esp. Tombs, Latin American Liberation Theology, 85-86, 96-97.

72 Escobar, La chispa y la llama, 80. See footnote 1 in Lowman, The Day of His Power: A History of The International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, 201-202. See also Stanley, Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism, 158-159.
brought together our own experience (propia vivencia), inside the tradition of the Fellowship.\textsuperscript{73} That unique element was social theology, manifested in practical social action among the poor.\textsuperscript{74}

Careful attention to archival documents and unpublished papers also clarifies and corrects oral history surrounding this course. The Lima 1966 course was the first action taken by Padilla after his return from Manchester, England, where he had completed his PhD under F. F. Bruce (1910-1990). At the time, Bruce was “the most prominent conservative evangelical biblical scholar of the post-war era.”\textsuperscript{75} Padilla had been appointed the first General Secretary of IFES for Latin America after finishing his thesis in October of 1965 and graduating in absentia from Latin America in June of 1966. Padilla later recalled the Lima course as “a way of promoting not only evangelization as oral proclamation of the Gospel, but of promoting integral discipleship, including the social dimension of the Gospel.”\textsuperscript{76} Yet, this full-orbed understanding of misión integral is most likely applied retrospectively here. The first time Padilla utilized the phrase “social dimensions of the Gospel” in writing was in 1973, in an article for Certeza magazine—the IFES magazine for Latin America.\textsuperscript{77} A

\textsuperscript{73} Escobar, \textit{La chispa y la llama}, 81.

\textsuperscript{74} Samuel Escobar, interview and translated by author, Valencia, 22 October, 2013. René Padilla, e-mail message to author, translated by author, 8 October, 2013.

\textsuperscript{75} Stanley, \textit{Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism}, 54. René Padilla, e-mail message to author, translated by author, 8 October, 2013.

\textsuperscript{76} René Padilla, e-mail message to author, translated by author, 8 October, 2013.

\textsuperscript{77} C. René Padilla, "Evangelio y responsabilidad social," \textit{Certeza} 7, no. 52 (1973).
year earlier, he had used the phrase “dimensions of the gospel.” Yet, in June 1966, Padilla was three months removed from having completed his doctoral dissertation, in which his language reflected the prevalent Protestant evangelical understanding of social theology—social action was an *implication* of the gospel message, not *inherent* to it. Padilla certainly emphasized social action in his thesis by saying, “It cannot be overemphasized that the Gospel has social implications.” Yet, he lambasted the attempt to read social transformation into the Bible:

> To the embarrassment of the modern social reformer, in none of the Pauline epistles is there the slightest suggestion that the Church will eventually mould the social structures or that it is incumbent upon her to do so. To hold that…is an arbitrary modernisation of his teaching. *The idea that the Church is an agency of ‘social redemption’ to be brought about through the permeation of society by Christian principles is a modern invention; the attempt to justify it by an appeal to Paul or any other Biblical writer is doomed to failure*” (Italics mine).

It is clear, then, that in the mid-1960s René Padilla’s understanding of social ethics reflected mainstream Protestant evangelical theology. Archival documents also reveal that Padilla’s doctoral thesis was more than a distant thought in his mind—indeed, it formed the basis of his plenary talk at Lima 1966 titled “The Church and the World.” One participant in the course wrote, “In René Padilla’s lectures the conclusion of more liberal theological approaches was rejected, i.e. that God’s purpose is to change the structures of society…the only Biblical approach that of [sic]

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80 Ibid., 252. See also pp. 114-116.
winning the individual in bringing him deliverance from the Kingdom of Darkness to the Kingdom of Light.”

In his PhD thesis, Padilla discovered raw ingredients that would later fill in his understanding of integral mission—mainly the inseparability of word and action, the kingdom of God as the basis for social ethics, and eschatology as its framework. Careful attention to chronology here also reveals that Padilla discovered and began utilising kingdom of God language prior to the rise of liberation theology. The impact of returning to the Latin American context again threw into question Padilla’s understanding of social theology, and demanded, in Padilla’s words, “a new way of doing theology.” At this point Padilla still lacked the theological categories of misión integral but not the space to experiment with praxis-oriented ministry.

3.5. From Implication to Content: René Padilla and the Social Dimensions of the Gospel

By 1970, René Padilla had shifted his language from speaking of the social implications of the gospel to its inescapably social content. He was fueled by discontent with the inadequacy of mainstream Protestant evangelical theology and the false gospel of Marxism, which he viewed as “devoid of spiritual content.” Similarly, the sociopolitical context of Argentina, where he had lived since 1967, remained at the forefront of his mind. After Juan Perón’s return from exile in June of 1973 and subsequent death from a heart attack the next year, Argentina was plunged into chaos.

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Two years later, a coup d’état ushered military rule back into Argentina, along with the infamous Dirty War, in which 15,000-30,000 alleged leftist sympathizers were murdered or disappeared. In this context, Padilla continued to search for and develop Protestant evangelical social theology.

Padilla first wrote on what he called “the customary divorce” between evangelism and social action in 1970 in an article entitled “Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista O Evangélica?” (Latin American Theology: Radical or Evangelical?). This article was a direct response to a controversial book of the same title by Peter Wagner, which sought to inject North American Protestant evangelical theological methodology into fledgling Latin American dialogue. In due course, I will discuss this book in more detail. Here, we shall simply note Padilla’s response. Padilla wrote:

The proclamation of the gospel (kerygma) and the demonstration of the gospel that gives itself in service (diakonía) form an indivisible (indisoluble) whole. One without the other is an incomplete, mutilated (mutilado) gospel and consequently, contrary to the will of God. From this perspective, it is foolish to ask about the relative importance of evangelism and social responsibility. This would be equivalent to asking about the relative importance of the right wing and the left wing of a plane.

Padilla posited an understanding of Christian mission that dissolved the barrier between social action and evangelism. In doing so, he connected the social


85 This gloss reflects Padilla’s English word choice. See also page 74, where I first referred to this article.

86 This book will be further discussed in chapter five, pp. 153-155.

87 Padilla, "Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdistas o Evangélicos?" 139.
dimensions of Christian mission to the content of the gospel message itself. Padilla’s article was prescient in comparison to wider Protestant evangelical dialogue on social ethics and theology.\textsuperscript{88} He continued to publish in Spanish, increasingly interrogating the “dimensions of the gospel.”\textsuperscript{89}

Three years later, in 1973, Padilla first posed the question “What is the gospel?” to the English-speaking world in a 1973 *Christianity Today* review article.\textsuperscript{90} That same year, Padilla answered the question in Spanish in a monumental article for *Certeza* magazine titled “Evangelio y responsabilidad social” (gospel and social responsibility):

Although the Gospel has to do with the personal relation of man with God, it’s not simply a formula of individual salvation, but also the proclamation that…God acted in Jesus Christ to create a new humanity. It is the good news…of the Kingdom of God in the person of Jesus Christ. And in this event, the most important of all time, Christian ethics (as well as theology) encounters its beginning and end.\textsuperscript{91}

Here, Padilla expanded for the first time his understanding of the “social dimension of the Gospel.”\textsuperscript{92} For Padilla, the gospel was more than just personal salvation—it was the announcement of the coming of the kingdom of God. Later in the same article,


\textsuperscript{89} Padilla, "La Teología en Latinoamerica," 7.


\textsuperscript{91} Padilla, "Evangelio y responsabilidad social," 109.

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid.
Padilla collapsed ethics, eschatology, and the gospel together, saying, “The Christian ethic is the Gospel clothed until its ultimate consequences.”

Later in the same decade, Padilla continued this conversation in English. The IFES General Committee met in 1975 at Schloss Mittersill castle, the IFES headquarters in Austria, under the theme of “The Gospel Today.” This paper was later published in Spanish in El Evangelio Hoy, and later in Misión integral and the English version Mission Between the Times. Padilla wrote,

The most important questions that should be asked with regard to the life and mission of the Church today are not related to the relevance but to the content of the gospel. To be sure, there is a place for the consideration of ways in which the gospel meets man’s needs in the modern world. Far more basic however is the consideration of the nature of the gospel that could meet man’s needs. The what of the gospel determines the how of its effects in practical life.

From 1975 onward, Padilla would explore the content of the gospel, eventually leading toward a fully formed understanding of misión integral. Within the sociopolitical tumult of post-war Latin America, the university campus continued to be a laboratory for theological and social experimentation under René Padilla’s leadership within the IFES.

3.6. Conclusion

By paying careful attention to previously ignored archival documents, early Spanish publications, census reports, and Spanish interviews, the social context and early development of misión integral have emerged as both clear and complex. Padilla’s proximity to the revolutionary Latin American university context, in

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93 Ibid.


95 BGCA, SC 46, Box 12, Folder 1, “What Is The Gospel?”
particular, gave rise to both unique theological questions and discontent with pre-packaged answers, making the university a metaphorical classroom within which contextual responses were formed. Padilla and Escobar were developing integral mission *en embargo* contiguously with liberation theology and broad reforms within the Roman Catholic Church such as the Second Vatican Council and CELAM II.

Australian C. Stacey Woods contributed farsighted leadership in developing the role of national leaders within the global structure of IFES and providing the freedom to explore contextual theological methodology. This global organizational structure and leadership environment was unique within evangelical para-church ministries. The raw ingredients of *misión integral* sprang from the expanding post-war Latin American universities, in which Marxist ideas of revolutionary change exerted a growing appeal to students. This matriculation swell was preceded by waves of rural-urban migration, leaving in its wake urban poverty and a context ripe for radical student idealism. The social origins of *misión integral*, then, are found within a revolutionary university context. Its key ideas took shape within the Latin American evangelical student movement, and were developed by Latin American thinkers themselves. Integral mission themes arose, not as a response to developments within the Catholic Church, but as a response to the same political and social stimuli that gave rise to liberation theology.
Part Two

The Intellectual Origins and Development of *Misión Integral*
Chapter Four: Padilla and the Intellectual Origins of *Misión Integral*

The meager historiography on Latin American Protestant evangelical social theology has often described it as unidirectional—essentially a Latin American monologue directed toward the rest of global evangelicalism. Social location alone, however, cannot produce theological methodologies. Theologians do not simply react to contexts; they react to contexts with intellectual resources drawn from a variety of sources. This chapter will instead argue that from its very inception *misión integral* was a global conversation, influenced by voices as diverse as the movement of evangelicalism itself. The influences upon *misión integral* were multidirectional, mirroring Padilla’s educational journey: from Wheaton College to Manchester University and to a missionary-influenced Latin American Protestant landscape. This chapter is essentially a work of intellectual archaeology, attempting to uncover the sources of Padilla’s theology, without diminishing its roots in the Latin American context. By challenging the prevailing narrative of *misión integral*, the chapter invites further reflection on the diversity of evangelical Protestant missiology.


René Padilla was connected to Wheaton College at a young age: his parents befriended Dr. Victor Raymond Edman (1900-1967), president of Wheaton College from 1940 to 1965, when Edman was a missionary in Quito from 1923 to 1928.¹ Padilla addressed both his most effusive praise and his most biting critique to

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¹ Wheaton College Archives, V. Raymond Edman Papers, SC 08, http://www2.wheaton.edu/learnres/ARCSC/collects/sc08/
Wheaton College in the suburbs of Chicago as he experienced it from 1953 to 1960.\textsuperscript{2}

In a 2013 interview, one name surfaced repeatedly as crucial in Padilla’s theological development: his Master’s supervisor Arthur F. Holmes.\textsuperscript{3}

Arthur F. Holmes (1924-2011) was born in Dover, England, to a Baptist family (his father was a lay preacher and a school teacher).\textsuperscript{4} Holmes later completed his entire education in the Chicago area: he took a BA and MA from Wheaton College in 1950 and 1952 respectively followed by a PhD in Philosophy from Northwestern University in 1957.\textsuperscript{5} Holmes taught at Wheaton College for over four decades, chairing the Philosophy Department from its founding in 1969 to 1994 (Prior to 1969, Philosophy fell within the Bible and Philosophy Department).\textsuperscript{6} Padilla explicitly chose his philosophy major so that he could take more courses with Holmes.\textsuperscript{7} Padilla later cited Holmes’ work as providing the raw ingredients for his project of contextualizing the Gospel.

In \textit{Mission Between the Times} Padilla turned to what he called “the epistemology of biblical realism” to ground his understanding of the contextualization of the Gospel. Padilla expanded his concept of contextualization beyond the

\textsuperscript{2} For Padilla’s praise of Wheaton, see Padilla, "Siervo de la Palabra," 114.

\textsuperscript{3} Holmes was his first reader. René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 13 September 2013.

\textsuperscript{4} Wheaton College Archives and Special Collections, “Arthur F. Holmes Papers,” SC 183, Box 2, Folder “Correspondence,” “Chapel Address: ‘My Spiritual Pilgrimage, 1982.’” (Researcher’s note: WCASC has a separate cataloguing system than BGCA).

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., “Vita: Arthur F. Holmes.”

\textsuperscript{6} See BGCA, SC 300, Hudson T. Armerding to Arthur Holmes, 14 March, 1969 for the announcement of its founding.

\textsuperscript{7} René Padilla, interview by author, Buenos Aires, 13 September, 2013 (p. 43 of field notes).
historical context to “the metaphysical, the ethical, and the personal.” Padilla’s three main theses are taken from Holmes’ 1971 work *Faith Seeks Understanding*. For example, the idea of knowledge being social, rather than isolated pieces of information for individuals, spoke strongly to a Latin American context dominated by premillennial dispensational eschatology and heavy emphasis on ‘saving souls.’ In his work, Holmes concluded, “Scripture knows no dichotomy of the physical and spiritual.” Ultimately, Holmes’ purpose in connecting knowledge to community was effective communication. Holmes provided the philosophical categories that Padilla used to articulate a Latin American contextual evangelical theology inextricably tied to local realities. From Holmes, Padilla gleaned a philosophical grounding in personal knowledge fused to social realities, founded on a synthesis between the spiritual and the physical, and driven toward effective communication. Here, Padilla found some of the raw ingredients that would later comprise his understanding of *misión integral*.

While Holmes contributed to Padilla’s understanding of contextualizing the Gospel message, his influence upon Padilla as a mentor was even more significant. As a Briton, Holmes occupied a position that made it easier to resonate with international students like Padilla, and to critique Wheaton’s broad political loyalty to republicanism. Holmes encouraged students to engage critically with evangelical doctrines—even defending the presence of agnostic students against the threat of

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8 Padilla, *Mission Between the Times*, 106.


11 Ibid., 133.
expulsion issued by Wheaton College Dean Peter Veltman. Holmes challenged students like Padilla to wrestle with evangelicalism, even to the point of broadening its tent. It is not surprising, then, that when Holmes lobbied for philosophy to be an independent major at Wheaton, Holmes mentioned Padilla as a positive example of the type of student Wheaton was producing. Holmes could not have foreseen the influence he would later have on Padilla nor the eventual shockwaves sent back to the Wheaton establishment.

In a 2013 interview, Padilla described a conversation that immediately followed his controversial plenary speech at the Lausanne Congress in 1974, in which he lambasted the exportation of “American culture Christianity” around the world. Padilla recounted that after his speech, he was met on the platform by a “very important leader” from the United States—someone “very, very related with Wheaton College”—whom Padilla did not identify by name. The most probable leader, given his prominence as a Wheaton alumnus and leader on the platform at Lausanne would be none other than Billy Graham. In Padilla’s 2013 account, this American leader approached him saying, “How can you say what you said if you graduated from Wheaton?” Padilla said he responded, “Precisely there [sic] I learned to do critical thinking.” While Padilla’s speech signaled the rise of Majority World evangelical

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12 WCASC, Arthur Holmes Papers, Box 20, Arthur F. Holmes to Peter Veltman, 16 April, 1968.

13 See for example Holmes pushing Wheaton president Edman to include Edward Carnell after his involvement in the Fuller Seminary controversy, see Record Group # 2. 5. 0. Provost. Hudson T. Armerding. Box 9, Holmes to Edman, 27 March, 1964.

14 WCASC, SC 183, Record Group # 2. 5. 0. Provost. Hudson T. Armerding. Box 9, Folder “Arthur Holmes.”

15 Researcher’s note: this quote was spoken in English. René Padilla, interview by author, Buenos Aires, 13 September, 2013
Protestant leadership, it caused a stir with fellow alumni from Wheaton College—to which he gave credit for forming his critical capacities. What is most clear from Padilla’s time at Wheaton is that it grounded him in an intellectually fertile tradition of evangelicalism, which Padilla would eventually draw upon to critique the very institution that trained him, challenging the foundations of evangelical mission, for which Wheaton stood as a symbol. Padilla’s critique at Lausanne, then, was not simply a Latin American monologue, but the result of a global conversation—from American missionaries in Quito, to Padilla’s diverse theological training, both in Wheaton and his research at Manchester during PhD studies under F. F. Bruce.

4.2. Padilla at Manchester University (1963-1965): F. F. Bruce, George Eldon Ladd, and Theologies of the Kingdom

Padilla graduated from Wheaton College in January 1960 in absentia. He was already a traveling secretary with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students by July 1959, six months after Fulgencio Batista’s regime was toppled in Cuba by forces loyal to Fidel Castro. From Latin America, Padilla then applied to four PhD programs—Harvard University, the University of Chicago, the University of Edinburgh and the University of Manchester. Padilla chose to include Manchester because of the possibility to study under Bruce—Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis from 1959 to 1978. If the goal was to interact with the best of Euro-American evangelical scholarship, one could hardly do better than Bruce—his star was rising within and outside evangelical circles. Indeed, Brian Stanley, in

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16 See also pp. 95, 104-108, 129.

17 See also p. 55.

18 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 13 September 2013.
his 2013 work *Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism* described Bruce as “the most prominent conservative evangelical biblical scholar of the post-war era.” Upon being accepted in 1963, Padilla packed up along with his wife Catharine and their two oldest daughters, and moved to Europe. Bruce perhaps chose Padilla due to his own personal involvement in student ministry throughout his career. Most significantly, Bruce was the president of InterVarsity Fellowship from 1954 to 1955 and Vice-President from 1943 to 1968 (until the list stopped being printed). At every university Bruce attended or taught, he became deeply involved in student ministry. Bruce also had a passion to see evangelical student groups becoming more intellectual, at a time when many were wary of intellectualism. He was also at the forefront of endeavors to create an evangelical form of critical scholarship—studying under Bruce thus offered the prospect to Padilla of entering into conversation with the best of this resurgence.

What is perhaps most surprising, however, is the apparent lack of influence Bruce had on Padilla. In a 2013 interview, Padilla recalled only rarely meeting with Bruce regarding his thesis work (though he had various meals at the Bruce home), and eventually stopped scheduling supervisions with him owing to the lack of constructive comments. Accounts from other students seem to corroborate Padilla’s

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20 Tim Grass, *F.F. Bruce: A Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 21, 37. Bruce’s definitive biographer, Tim Grass, mentions Padilla among the notable students of Bruce, along with Ward Gasque, Robert Gundry, Murray Harris, Seyoon Kim, Clark Pinnock and David Wenham, among others.

21 Ibid., 41-42. Bruce was instrumental in the early years of the Biblical Research Committee, which came out of the IVF.


23 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 15 September 2013. Page 51 of field notes.
recollection regarding inattentive supervision. Bruce was also a classicist and technical biblical scholar, not a theologian. However, while Bruce was not a significant theological influence on Padilla, he gained from Bruce, more than anything, the academic and evangelical credibility that came along with studying “under” him. For example, Paul Little, staff worker with InterVarsity-USA and later associate professor at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Program Director of Lausanne 1974, met Padilla in 1966 in Latin America. Little was in Latin America for the student training program that took place across Latin America. Little wrote home in his newsletter that Padilla had just finished his PhD thesis with F. F. Bruce. Little would later play a role in inviting Padilla to speak at Lausanne 1974. Similarly, John Stott noted in his travel diary in January 1974 that Padilla studied “under F. F. Bruce at Manchester.” This entry came just months before the Lausanne Congress, where Stott’s relationship with Padilla would prove crucial to the later inclusion of social elements in the Lausanne covenant.

Padilla completed his PhD thesis titled “Church and World: A Study Into the Relation Between the Church and the World in the Teaching of Paul the Apostle” in


25 BGCA, SC 300, Box 139, Folder 35, Little Newsletter, June 1966. Little first met Padilla in 1966 working in a church called Pueblo Libre Church.

26 Lambeth Palace Library, John Stott Papers. John Stott Travel Diary, Mexico, 9-14 January, 1974. See also Padilla’s early description in *Certeza* magazine identifying him with Bruce. C. René Padilla, "Mensaje bíblico y revolución," *Certeza* 39(1970). See also, for example, C. René Padilla, "God's word and man's words," *Evangelical Quarterly* 53(1981). Here, Padilla’s bio begins with the description, “Dr. Padilla is a former student of Professor F. F. Bruce in the University of Manchester.” See also Chris Sugden, phone interview by author, 13 May, 2014.

October 1965, graduating in absentia from Latin America in June 1966. He had been named the first General Secretary for Latin America of IFES in the summer of 1966, prior to his graduation. His PhD research has often been referenced and even praised but never studied. His thesis is a document that reflects its time and location; it is a work of conservative evangelical biblical scholarship, with no reference to the Latin American context or even to what would later be termed integral mission.  

Despite the absence of an explicitly missiological dimension to his thesis, Padilla gave credit to his PhD research for providing raw ingredients for his later social theological work—specifically the “the eschatological dimension of the gospel…this basic emphasis in the New Testament that we are living between the times, and this is the time when we experience the tension between the already and the not-yet of biblical eschatology.” Elsewhere, Padilla expanded that his “Lausanne paper was a synthesis of insights I had gained through my doctoral studies, combined with years of experience in university student work.”

Padilla wrote at a time of resurgent emphasis on the kingdom of God as a theological category. Among the various conservative evangelical biblical scholars who wrote on the theology of the kingdom, perhaps foremost in this group was North American Baptist George Eldon Ladd (1911-1982), who at the time was a professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Ladd

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28 Padilla, "My Theological Pilgrimage," 100. This article borrows significantly from the earlier book chapter Padilla, "Siervo de la Palabra."


taught at Fuller from 1950 to 1980. Ladd’s 1964 work *Jesus and the Kingdom: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* (later republished under the title *The Presence of the Future: The Eschatology of Biblical Realism* in 1974) was the high point of his academic career and the result of over a decade of research (though his work *A Theology of the New Testament* (1974) was also influential). *Jesus and the Kingdom* sought a middle way between the “consistent” or “thoroughgoing eschatology” of Albert Schweitzer and the “realized eschatology” of C. H. Dodd—a middle way which Ladd described as a “synthesis of futuristic and realized eschatology.” As fundamentalism and dispensationalism went out of vogue, conservative evangelical biblical scholars searched for alternative understandings of eschatology that would address post-war social realities. Both Ladd and Carl Henry (along with others such as Edward Carnell) held a premillennial eschatology, while sharing discontent with the dispensational strands of the eschatological understanding which dominated conservative evangelicalism. In response to this perceived vacuum, many neo-evangelicals turned to the theology of the kingdom.

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32 Ibid., 122.


35 Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism*, 81, 94. See also 135, 204, 211. See also Stanley, "Evangelical Social and Political Ethics: An Historical Perspective." See especially pp. 33ff.
By the 1960s, there was a growing consensus among neo-evangelicals regarding the present and future characteristics of the kingdom of God. Even Padilla’s early antagonist Peter Wagner wrote in 1969, “The Kingdom of God, or the age to come, has invaded today’s world in a real but anticipatory way.” In *Jesus and the Kingdom*, Ladd preferred to use the phrase “eschatological tension” to refer to this middle place of future and present reality—the “already” and “not yet” of the kingdom of God. This eschatological tension, Ladd described most clearly by saying, “The church… is a people who live ‘between the times.’ They are caught up in a tension between the kingdom of God and a sinful world, between the age to come and the present evil age.” Ladd ultimately connected his theology of the kingdom to his soteriology: “To be in the Kingdom is to receive the gospel of the Kingdom and experience its salvation.” Ultimately for Ladd, “It was necessary to make the case for a kingdom that had both present and future reality. This was one of the cracks in the dispensational system through which Ladd would launch his attack.”

Padilla relegated his discussion of the kingdom of God almost entirely to the final two chapters of his thesis—due, in part, to its focus on ecclesiology. In chapter

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39 Ladd, *Jesus and the Kingdom*, 334.


41 D’Elia, *A Place at the Table*, 47.
five, Padilla channeled Ladd’s language of *between the times* to speak of the eschatological character of the kingdom of God: “She [the church] looks back to the incarnation and forward to the parousia, and lives ‘between the times.’” The final chapter, which opens under the heading “between the times,” is a thematic break from the rest of the thesis, moving from theology to ethics. One might expect to find *misión integral* themes, given the narrative surrounding the thesis. Yet, rather than containing a fledgling social theology, Padilla’s writing fits well within his contemporary conservative evangelical biblical framework. Here, Padilla saw any attempt by the Church to reform existing social structures as a dangerous slackening in the eschatological tension of the kingdom of God. Padilla’s discussion of Pauline theology focused mainly on references to a future kingdom in the Pauline epistles. In arguing against “social transformation” Padilla wrote, “It cannot be overemphasized that eschatology—futuristic eschatology—is of the core of the Christian faith and that there can be no ‘genuine Biblical basis for social ethics’ apart from an honest facing of it.” Though Padilla’s thesis focused on Pauline epistles, he often cited those who wrote on Jesus and the gospels. Padilla connects them somewhat vaguely, arguing for “Paul’s dependence on Jesus in his ethical teaching.”

42 Padilla, "Church and World."

43 Ibid., 210.

44 Ibid., 258.

45 Here Padilla referenced 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 15:50; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; 1 Thess. 2.12; 2 Thess. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1, 18 saying “five occur in ethical contexts.” See p. 213.

46 Ibid., 254.

47 Ibid., 240.
Perhaps the most distinctive feature of misión integral is its understanding of social ethics as part of the gospel, rather than an implication of it (the primary understanding of social ethics within post-war evangelicalism). Yet, as chapter three described, Padilla had not yet discovered this contribution. Similarly, Padilla spoke of an expanded gospel within his thesis. Yet, what he included in terms of its “wider dimensions” was not social but rather an ethical separation from worldliness. He wrote, Christians “have their homeland in heaven and this ‘otherworldliness’…is an integral part of the Gospel.”

Padilla had thus discovered the eschatological tension of the “already and the not yet” but had not yet applied it to the fields of social ethics and missions in the way he would from 1974 onward. In contrast, in his PhD thesis, he was still utilizing this eschatological tension of the kingdom to rebuke those attempting to work toward social transformation. This literary analysis, combined with the analysis of Lima 1966 in chapter three, has revealed that Padilla’s thesis cannot be given credit for the genesis of his social theology. It did, however, provide theological ideas in embryo which, when fully formed, would serve a critical function within misión integral. In his PhD research, Padilla, through his reading of Ladd had come to a realization that the kingdom of God was “the heart of [Jesus’] proclamation and the key to his entire

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49 See chapter three, p. 96-97. Padilla, "Church and World," 245. For more implication language, see p. 246.

50 Ibid., 218.

ministry.”  

Ladd’s phrase “between the times” also later became part of the title of Padilla’s *Mission Between the Times: Essays on the Kingdom*.

From Ladd, Padilla gained the eschatological framework of the kingdom of God, which would provide the central, organizing principle for his theology of the kingdom. Yet, to apply these realities to the Latin American context Padilla, along with an entire generation of Latin American Protestant evangelicals, found critical congruence with the work of Scottish theologian John A. Mackay.

**4.3. Padilla and The Latin American Missionary Context: John A. Mackay’s Call for Contextualization**

The decades of the 1930s and 1940s represented an intellectual low-water mark for evangelicalism in many parts of the world.  

Though there were many individual exceptions, the nation of Scotland largely stood alone in terms of a robust theological development due to “the combined influence of a dominant Reformed tradition and an unrivalled system of public education.”  

This intellectual tradition, combined with a vigorous missionary-sending culture, produced influence around the world that was disproportionate to its size.  

Most importantly for purposes here, Scotland provided the foremost Protestant evangelical theologian in Latin America in the first half of the twentieth century: John A. Mackay (1889-1983).

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Mackay grew up in the Free Presbyterian Church in Inverness, later becoming a missionary of the Free Church of Scotland to Latin America from 1916 to 1932—though he often visited after his missionary tenure.\textsuperscript{56} Mackay studied at the University of Aberdeen, where he earned an honours degree in 1913. He was involved significantly with the Student Volunteer Movement at Princeton Theological Seminary (PTS) in New Jersey, where he graduated in 1915.\textsuperscript{57} That year, Mackay won a theological fellowship to study in Europe. Due to World War I, Mackay ruled out Germany and Britain. Mackay’s PTS professor, the celebrated American Reformed theologian B.B. Warfield, suggested that Mackay should study the Hispanic religious tradition in Spain in preparation for Mackay’s missionary work in Latin America. This advice from Warfield would bear fruit for Mackay’s entire career. On Warfield’s recommendation, Mackay later recalled, “I was taking up the incarnational approach. I wanted to become mostly related to, identified with, Latin America cultural reality, on an instrumental basis so that I would…win the right to be heard.”\textsuperscript{58} Mackay spent the year in Madrid drinking deeply from the well of Spanish and Hispanic intellectual tradition. Not only did he master the Spanish language, but he developed a profound respect for the traditions of Latin America through his acquaintance with Professor Miguel de Unamuno, who later became a well-known


philosopher. Mackay has also been hailed for his educational work, founding an influential school in Peru called Colegio Anglo Peruano (now Colegio San Andres). During his missionary tenure, Mackay carried out evangelistic campaigns with the YMCA, and lectured at over thirty-five Latin American universities. Mackay’s goals were deeper than education or ecumenism, however. Mackay longed for Latin America to encounter a vibrant, living faith—the Christ of the Scriptures. In Mackay’s words, he sought to “introduce the evangelical into the cultural.” Thus, Mackay wrote his most influential book *The Other Spanish Christ* in 1932 as an attempt to diagnose the problems of Latin American Christianity and its need for a contextual gospel message. After a productive missionary career in Latin America, Mackay was eventually recruited to lead his alma mater Princeton Theological Seminary as president, being formally installed on 2 February, 1937.

Mackay’s life and work spoke into a context where contextual Latin American theology was lacking. Escobar recalled, “Years before, when I faced personally the strong challenge of Marxism in university, I found out that the evangelical theological canon was no help in the struggle.” Then, “When I asked for help for my intellectual struggles on campus, the best my missionary-pastor could give me was a poorly translated Spanish version of the book *Christian Evidences* by E.Y. Mullins”, the notable Southern Baptist theologian and educator. Mackay’s life and work influenced an entire generation of Latin American Protestant evangelical thinkers. In Mackay, this generation found a rare bridge between faithfulness to the Latin

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59 It is worth noting here that Samuel Escobar later taught at Colegio San Andres while a university student at San Marcos University.

60 Gillette and Mackay, "John A. Mackay: Influences on My Life”, 29.

American context and to their understanding of evangelical orthodoxy. In a 2013 interview, the researcher asked Samuel Escobar about the progression of understanding social action as not only an implication of the gospel message, but inherent within it. Escobar was unequivocal: “I believe this is part of the heritage of Mackay.”

Escobar expanded:

This had a strong influence, I believe, possibly in René [Padilla] too, in my understanding that the idea of loving neighbor and serving as an essential (constitutiva) part of the message of the Gospel—it wasn’t added. So, the polemic was always for North American missionaries, and for many pastors, it wasn’t part of the Gospel. So, in this sense, I believe that we received an inheritance from Mackay.

Elsewhere, Escobar was explicit with regard to Mackay’s influence on his colleagues, “The writings of Latin American ecumenical theologians like Emilio Castro and José Míguez Bonino, or evangelicals like René Padilla and Pedro Arana, show Mackay's pervasive influence.” Escobar was not alone in giving Mackay credit for catalyzing social theology. In a 2014 interview, Pedro Arana, successor to Padilla as General Secretary for Latin America with IFES, also gave (unprompted) credit to Mackay for providing the category of an expanded gospel message.

Similarly, in a 2014 interview, Ruth Padilla DeBorst, who is an emerging evangelical leader and daughter of René Padilla, also spoke of Mackay’s influence on the earlier generation: “He gave them a good model, inspiration, in different ways and different

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62 Ibid.
63 Ibid.
places they all cite him as just a helpful—model personally, but also his read of Latin American religiosity… I think that he was very influential on that whole generation.”

Padilla DeBorst also spoke of the influence of Mackay’s *The Other Spanish Christ* in a 2007 article in *Christianity Today*. While Padilla’s colleagues readily gave credit to outside influences for the development of their theological thinking, Padilla was much more reticent to do so. For example, when asked the same question as Escobar above on implication to content, Padilla was insistent that he simply read the Latin American context. In a 2008 article, Padilla simply noted that reading Mackay reminded him of Latin America’s theological poverty. Yet, this later recollection is perhaps at odds with his comments in the 1960s. Indeed, in a 1966 article, Padilla wrote, “Over thirty years ago Dr. John A. Mackay wrote of the need in Latin America for a new type of evangelism—the ‘lecture without cult’, in which the speaker takes the message to people in their own situation and presents it as something valuable in itself rather than as a part of a church service.”

Here, Padilla was clear regarding the benefit of Mackay’s work: “The relevance of this approach to the present-day university situation cannot be overemphasized.” Padilla’s footnote made clear he was referring to Mackay’s most famous work *The Other Spanish Christ*.

In *The Other Spanish Christ* (1932), Mackay decried the importation of a foreign Jesus to Latin America, and declared the pressing need for replacing imported

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66 Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Skype interview by author, 4 December, 2014.


68 See chapter three, p. 93.

theology with contextual theology and national leadership. \textsuperscript{70} Padilla described the book as “an outstanding example of the sort of apologetics that evangelical theologians felt compelled to articulate in the face of Roman Catholic hegemonic power in Latin America.” \textsuperscript{71} Padilla expanded, “This book became a classic and is still regarded as one of the best explanations of the \textit{raison d’entrée} [sic] of Protestant Christianity in a Roman Catholic continent.” Mackay also saw theological education as a mission field, arguing that theology must be contextualized for Latin Americans to truly grasp Christ. \textsuperscript{72} Early in his own career, Padilla noted that Mackay influenced his understanding of the need for Latin American theological education led by Latin Americans themselves—an emphasis that became one of Padilla’s enduring legacies. \textsuperscript{73} Yet, as Arana and Escobar wrote above, Mackay’s contribution in terms of the social element in the gospel is foremost here. In \textit{The Other Spanish Christ}, Mackay expounded the message that the kingdom of God had social as well as personal elements. Mackay wrote, “Jesus’ concept of the kingdom of God had a social as well as a personal aspect. It was a state of society as well as a state of the soul.” \textsuperscript{74} Thus, while Padilla had first discovered the importance of the kingdom of God through the influence of neo-evangelicals such as Ladd, he applied the kingdom

\textsuperscript{70} John Alexander Mackay, \textit{The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America}. (London1932), 95.


\textsuperscript{72} Mackay, \textit{The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America.}, 262.

\textsuperscript{73} Padilla, "A Steep Climb Ahead for Theology in Latin America," 41.

\textsuperscript{74} Mackay, \textit{The Other Spanish Christ: A Study in the Spiritual History of Spain and South America.}, 210.
in social terms through the influence of thinkers like Mackay. Mackay and Padilla shared the resource of the Latin American context—Mackay wrote *The Other Spanish Christ* from Mexico City, Mexico. Because of this shared resource and Mackay’s unique cultural sensitivity, his writing gained broad acceptance.

From 1970 onwards, Padilla increasingly addressed contextual realities within his social location. In doing so, his writing shows clear continuity with the emphases of Mackay. In his controversial Lausanne plenary paper, Padilla wrote, “Those of us who live in the Third World cannot and should not be satisfied with the rote repetition of doctrinal formulas or the indiscriminate application of canned methods of evangelization imported from the West.”75 The following year, he first utilized the phrase “the contextualization of the gospel” at an international consultation on evangelical literature in Latin America. The influence of Mackay is again manifest in his words:

> It must be admitted that the total panorama of the Church in the Third World continues to be that of a church without theology…there is no hope that this situation will change as long as the missions’ theological responsibility is conceived of as the exportation of theologies elaborated in the West. Especially in the fields of theological education…And as long as the Gospel does not attain a profound contextualization in the local culture, in the eyes of people in that culture it will continue to be a ‘foreign religion.’76

Continuity with Mackay’s emphases also surfaced at the first gathering of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT)—a missiological network formed in reaction to the 1980 Lausanne consultation in Pattaya, Thailand, where many Majority World theologians objected to a perceived

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disregard for the social emphases from the Lausanne Covenant of 1974.  

At INFEMIT in 1982, Padilla wrote, “The images of Jesus Christ imported from the West into the Two Thirds World are inadequate for the life and mission of the Church in situations of poverty and injustice.” Such laments at the isolation of evangelical theology from the daily realities of Latin American life and the importation of a “foreign religion” demonstrate clear continuity with Mackay’s emphases. Padilla ultimately channeled this global conversation into contextual Protestant evangelical theological production in Latin America. Thus far, this chapter has described intellectual influence through Padilla’s educational journey and the missionary-influenced Latin American Protestant landscape. Yet, influence on Padilla’s theological development also took place much closer to home.

4.4. American Women Missionaries and the Influence of Catharine Feser Padilla

Historiography on post-war Latin American Christianity has often presented a largely masculine story—names such as Gutiérrez, Míguez Bonino and Juan Luis Segundo predominate. The influence of Protestant women on the rise of Latin American social theology is a neglected field, which has been obscured by multiple religious and cultural layers—the widespread influence of American fundamentalist missions and conservative cultural understandings of gender. This section presents a

77 I will discuss the founding and significance of INFEMIT in chapter seven. See pp. 261-268.

case study of Catharine Feser Padilla (1932-2009). In doing so, it attempts to shed light on her significance on the rise of misión integral, and on the emphases of Padilla’s theology.

In the early post-war Latin American socio-religious context, lingering American fundamentalist missionary influence presented a stark juxtaposition to Protestant evangelical women such as Catharine Feser Padilla: conservative gender roles within churches alongside an uncommonly progressive organizational structure of parachurch ministries (that often allowed women near-equal access to preaching, teaching, and organisational leadership). The context of many female parachurch staff workers in post-war Latin America was socially progressive initiatives within a conservative sociocultural and religious context. Within this multi-layered setting, Feser Padilla condescended to her gendered context and exercised significant influence on the emergence of misión integral. In doing so, she carved out avenues for the global dissemination of integral mission themes through her bilingual editing and bicultural connections.

Much of René Padilla’s legacy depended on his ability to straddle the Spanish and English-speaking worlds. While historiography has begun to highlight Padilla’s importance in the rise of social theology in Latin America, and indeed global evangelicalism, nothing has been written (except by Padilla family members) on his closest colleague for nearly fifty years, Catharine Feser Padilla. This case study, in turn, will provide a window into the lives and influence of Protestant evangelical women in late modern evangelical Protestant Christianity.

In the post-war period, InterVarsity and IFES were often at the forefront of evangelical progressive causes in the United States. Indeed, the combination of a

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79 I am indebted to a conversation with Professor Dana Robert for inspiring this section.
founding organisation that was British, and an Australian general secretary, C. Stacey Woods, meant IFES was often more progressive than its American counterparts on issues of race and gender, and flexible on issues such as biblical inerrancy—the foremost American evangelical boundary marker of the post-war period. (As early as 1947, Woods took a stand against racial segregation in the United States). IFES was simultaneously resistant and beholden to American fundamentalist and evangelical emphases. As the gulf between fundamentalism and neo-evangelicalism widened from the late 1950s onward, so did the diversity of roles for women in ministry—perhaps nowhere more acutely than within parachurch organisations. Parachurch organisations then exerted increasing pressure on traditional gendered structures, and, in turn, wider influence on American evangelicalism. Catharine Padilla followed in the tradition of early twentieth-century women in Protestant fundamentalist circles, who turned to Bible teaching as the primary mode of carrying out a Christian calling.

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81 This will be expanded in a discussion on Padilla and the inerrancy of Scripture. See chapter five, pp. 155-174.


83 Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, Fundamentalism & Gender, 1875 to the Present (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 86.
4.4.1 From Pennsylvania to Patagonia: Teaching the Bible within Conservative Christianity

Catharine Feser was born on 5 November 1932 in the city of Philadelphia. She grew up in a “very conservative Christian”, well-educated family. Her parents were both ordained ministers, earning graduate degrees from Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary (EBTS, now Palmer Theological Seminary or PTS). EBTS was founded on March 25 1925. The seminary founders, according to PTS in 2014, “maintained that the agendas of conservative institutions were too narrow, particularly with regard to the prohibition of women in ministry and the absence of concern for social justice.” The theological training of her parents, then, grounded Feser Padilla in a progressive tradition of American fundamentalism. Her father Walter earned a Master of Theology (ThM) on 17 May 1933 and joined the pastorate soon after. Catharine’s mother passed away when she was just six years old—a loss that undoubtedly propelled the young Philadelphian toward independence. As a result, Catharine’s father also left the pastorate to care for his daughters.

84 Ibid.

85 Craig M. Miller, associate registrar of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, e-mail correspondence with author, 16 May, 2014.

86 Scott Alexander, Registrar’s Office Manager, Transcript Officer, Eastern University, e-mail correspondence with author, 16 June, 2014.

87 Craig M. Miller, associate registrar of Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, e-mail correspondence with author, 16 May, 2014. In a 2013 interview, René said Catharine’s father had earned a PhD but, according to Miller, EBTS never awarded the PhD degree and did not begin awarding the Doctor of Ministry until the late 1980s. EBTS’ affiliate Eastern University also only began awarding the PhD in 2012, according to Alexander. Scott Alexander, Registrar’s Office Manager, Transcript Officer, Eastern University, e-mail correspondence with author, 16 June, 2014.

later attended Wheaton College, earning a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Bible with
highest honor on 14 June 1954 and a Master of Arts (MA) in New Testament on 29
January, 1960. 89 Her formal education at Wheaton, a bastion of the fledgling
conservative evangelical movement, seemed destined to clash with her progressive
upbringing, especially in terms of gender roles. Yet, at the peak of the Civil Rights
Movement in the United States in the late 1950s and early 1960s, other progressive
issues were more pertinent on Wheaton’s campus, such as economic inequality. 90 At
Wheaton, Feser Padilla began volunteering with Foreign Mission Fellowship (now
International Mission Fellowship) and their mission work in a local Latino church. 91
As a Wheaton fourth-year student, Catharine began providing a lift to an Ecuadorian
first year named René Padilla (René had entered university at 20 years old, two years
later than was common among his North American classmates). 92 After graduating
from Wheaton, Catharine returned to her hometown of Philadelphia to be near her

89 Donna Rourke, Wheaton College Office of the Registrar, e-mail
correspondence with author, 12 July, 2014. Christopher J. H. Wright and Jonathan
Lamb, ed. Understanding and Using the Bible, SPCK International Study Guides
(London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2009), viii.

90 John Woodbridge, interview by author, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School,
Deerfield, Illinois, 22 April, 2014.

91 Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton College. Interview of René
Padilla by Paul Ericksen, 12 March, 1987. Collection 361, T1. Padilla was deeply
influenced by Puerto Rican and Mexican immigrants at this church. See Padilla,
"Siervo de la Palabra," 114.

92 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 12
September, 2013. See also Ruth Padilla DeBorst, "Catharine Feser Padilla: Bible,
Bed and Bread: A Matter of Distance," in Mission As Transformation: Learning from
Catalysts, ed. David Cranston and Ruth Padilla DeBorst (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock,
2014), 34.
widowed father and to teach in a “reform school for delinquent girls.” Catharine then joined the staff of InterVarsity Fellowship-USA for two years in Nebraska and South Dakota.

Joining an evangelical parachurch organisation opened avenues for Catharine to exercise diverse gifts and roles that were widely restricted to men in Protestant evangelical churches. As Margaret Lambert Bendroth demonstrated in her 1993 work *Fundamentalism and Gender: 1875 to the Present*, “The highest female career, that of Bible teacher, reflected the fundamentalist emphasis on public speaking as a sign of leadership and seemed, at least initially, not to contradict rules against women teachers.”

Feser Padilla’s work in InterVarsity-USA, IFES, as a professor of Greek at various interdenominational Protestant evangelical Latin American seminaries, and her later writing demonstrates the ways in which women within conservative evangelical circles could take leadership roles in traditionally male-restricted fields.

Catharine’s work as a professor, editor and parachurch staff worker extended her influence far beyond the context of her familial relationships. In a 1964 Delaware County Times newspaper article, her local pastor considered her “called out from his ministry” as a missionary—no mention was made of René. A later fund-raising letter also described her prioritization of both family and mission work: “Catharine

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94 Bendroth, *Fundamentalism & Gender*, 75.

95 For Feser Padilla’s focus on teaching the Bible, see Catharine Feser Padilla, "Using the Bible in Groups," in *Understanding and Using the Bible*, ed. Christopher J. H. Wright and Jonathan Lamb (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2009).

devotes time to their home, women’s work and Bible teaching. She teaches at the Christian and Missionary Alliance Bible Institute in Buenos Aires and often is invited to speak at conferences." Catharine was a Greek professor at Seminario Evangélico Interdenominacional in San Fernando and the Instituto Bíblico Buenos Aires (known in English as the Christian and Missionary Alliance Bible Institute), was founded in 1946 through C&MA missionaries Samuel and Vera Barnes. She also published a variety of books, including a Bible commentary (1-2 Thessalonians), a practical manual for the study of the Bible, and various other works on women in ministry.

After graduating from Wheaton College with his BA in Philosophy in 1957, René rejected overtures from IFES General Secretary and later mentor C. Stacey Woods to join the staff of IFES. Instead, as already noted, Padilla completed his MA. in Theology in 1960, graduating in absentia from Latin America. From Latin America, Padilla proposed marriage to his long-time American friend Catharine Feser.

4.4.2. Marrying Latin America: Missionary Calling, Gendered Context


René described his marriage proposal as explicitly twofold—to marry him and to marry Latin America. Because of this, Catharine initially denied his proposal. She had never even visited Latin America, and felt apprehensive leaving her widowed father. René insisted she reconsider. Catharine suspended her rejection and reconsidered for two years—finally accepting his proposal in 1960. Catharine’s prolonged decision finds continuity with nineteenth- and twentieth-century missionary wives’ biographies, such as Adoniram Judson’s proposal to Ann Hasseltine. Like Hasseltine, Feser Padilla had to decide first if she would marry an unknown mission field, with a foreign culture and language. On the other hand, the mission field often offered American fundamentalist (and later evangelical) women greater freedom in ministry—due to the lack of male missionaries and the nature of missionary work as para-church, as well.

Far from bystanders on the mission of their husbands, American women missionaries often leveraged marriage decisions in order to prioritise their own missionary calling. Dana Robert, in her ground-breaking research on American women missionaries, sheds light on the decision many American women missionaries had faced: “If one takes the evidence available from biographies of missionary wives at face value, it seems that only a minority of women chose the husband and then had to be persuaded to undertake the mission. Most of the time, the commitment to mission preceded commitment to the husband.” Thus, Catharine and René’s

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100 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 12 September, 2013.

101 Ibid.


103 Ibid., 21.
daughter Ruth Padilla DeBorst could describe her parents’ marriage and family as “grounded on a missiological covenant.”\textsuperscript{104} After Catharine and René’s wedding in January 1961, Catharine bought a one-way plane ticket to Bogotá. Her commitment to the priority of mission in Latin America, within its cultural, linguistic and sociopolitical context, had profound implications for not only the Padilla family but the emergence of misión integral itself.

4.4.3. Prioritising Mission: Catalyst to Misión Integral

Catharine and René settled in Bogotá in 1961, where Padilla had lived as a child.\textsuperscript{105} As a traveling secretary with IFES, René was constantly travelling throughout Latin America, often away from home for months at a time. On 14 January 1960 Padilla wrote to Samuel Escobar, recounting a five-week trip he took to Venezuela in Mérida, Caracas, Maracay, Barquisimeto and Maracaibo. This constant travelling continued into the 1970s. Indeed, Samuel Escobar wrote in 1977, “René Padilla does not appear to have a permanent home, since in his first months of work he was moved constantly through different university centers.”\textsuperscript{106} In his 1977 travel diary, John Stott wrote of René’s inner turmoil after another five-week trip around Latin America, and the joy of the Padilla children at seeing their father again.\textsuperscript{107}


\textsuperscript{105} See also chapter one, pp. 16-19. René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 12 September, 2013. See also Padilla, "My Theological Pilgrimage." Yale Divinity School Archives, World Christian Student Federation Papers, SC 46, Box 284, Folder 2500.

\textsuperscript{106} Escobar, \textit{La chispa y la llama}, 70.

\textsuperscript{107} Lambeth Palace Library, London, England, John R. W. Stott Papers, “Argentina 4-10 July 1977.” Special thanks to archivist Adele Allen for providing access to Stott’s papers while they were being catalogued.
Three years later, Stott accompanied the Padilla family on a camping trip in the Patagonia mountains of Argentina. Stott wrote in his travel diary, “They are a really delightful family. I think the world of René as a Christian leader, scholar and friend; Cathie is a marvelously unflappable, loving and capable wife and mother.” In continuity with many nineteenth and early twentieth-century missionary wives, Feser Padilla’s “unflappable” commitment to mission within her familial relationships allowed both René and her to prioritise mission. This prioritisation ultimately affected Padilla’s development of misión integral. In 1977, Escobar reflected, “These long travels…gave the workers a first-hand knowledge of the national reality in these countries, which added to the rising demand of students for guidance, eventually leading toward making social concern an ingredient of his ministry.” Escobar thus connected Padilla’s ability to travel away from home to his later inclusion of social concern in his ministry. This same freedom allowed Padilla to travel on multiple occasions with Stott, including a “birding” holiday in the Galapagos Islands—Stott’s favorite pastime. Escobar later credited the relationship between Padilla and Stott for the inclusion of social elements in paragraph five of the Lausanne Covenant.

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Six months before the Lausanne Congress of 1974, Stott and Padilla traveled throughout Latin America—a trip that included visiting “hardline communist” political prisoners—revolutionary students and professors who shared stories of torture by military regimes. This revolutionary context gave rise to misión integral, while these bilingual connections provided avenues for its later diffusion.

It is plausible to suggest that missionary longevity on the mission field in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was often intricately tied to the ability of both spouses to adapt to the newfound context. Feser Padilla’s thorough adoption of Latin America is perhaps most clearly shown through her eventual rejection of her own country, the United States. Feser Padilla adopted Latin America as her own, alongside an intense solidarity with widespread rejection of American foreign policy in Latin America. This thorough contextualisation flowed not only from her adoption of Latin America, but also from a progressive view of evangelical mission—holistically political, social, and theological.

4.4.4. Editing Misión Integral: Catharine Feser Padilla as Multilingual Conduit

When René Padilla arrived at Wheaton College in 1953 at age 20, his English vocabulary was limited to only a few words. Because of what Padilla called his “language problems,” he postponed the start of his studies, instead working in the cafeteria for the first semester—a job provided by Wheaton president and family

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friend Dr. Victor Raymond Edman (1900-1967), president of Wheaton College from 1940 to 1965. His linguistic challenges were also reflected in his Wheaton College transcript—his grades steadily improved as his time went on. Padilla also admitted his ministry at a local Spanish-speaking church (where he met Catharine) curtailed his apprehension of the English language. Much of Padilla’s later influence, however, depended on his ability to straddle the English- and Spanish-speaking worlds. While René later became proficient in English, how might his marriage to a native English speaker have extended the reach of his ideas, especially in the early years of the 1960s and 1970s?

Ruth Padilla DeBorst remembered her mother “Proof-reading and commenting on the papers [René] presented in world forums.” This editing was not limited to large public presentations, either. “Nothing escaped her eagle eye when she edited countless manuscripts in Spanish and English for Ediciones Kairos”, Padilla DeBorst expanded. In a 2013 interview, René himself said, “[Catharine] edited nearly everything I wrote.” Padilla’s colleague and successor as IFES General Secretary for Latin America Pedro Arana also called Catharine René’s

116 Padilla, "My Theological Pilgrimage," 96. For more on this connection to Padilla, see chapter four, p. 104.

117 The present researcher viewed Padilla’s Wheaton transcripts at the Kairos Center, Pacheco, Buenos Aires, 12 September, 2013.


“English editor” in a 2013 interview. Catharine’s extensive editing undoubtedly filled a gap between language proficiency and native language precision—expanding the reach of integral mission ideas.

4.4.5. Choosing the Background: Catharine Feser Padilla as Missionary Wife

Ultimately, like many missionary wives of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Catharine Feser Padilla worked tirelessly behind the scenes, actively eschewing the spotlight. Her daughter Elisa Padilla, now president of the Kairos Foundation and director of its literature project Ediciones Kairos, described her mother as “always serving in silence.” This description of Catharine appears to be true of her educational work, as well. One of her former students, Gladys Amador, said about her teaching, “She did not speak a lot, but she said a lot with her actions.” As René gained increasing attention and demand as a speaker, Catharine did not waver in her rejection of personal attention. Careful literary analysis also reveals that René often received authorial credit, even when Catharine contributed significantly to the content. For example, in 2003, they co-wrote Mujer y hombre en la misión de Dios (Man and woman in the mission of God). The book was adapted from a 1991 conference where both Catharine and René gave plenary speeches. The first half of the book is taken from René’s presentation but is designated as written by both Catharine and René. Indeed, in the first half, Catharine’s name is added to

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René’s republished presentation, yet for the second half—taken from Catharine’s presentation—René’s name is not added. In a separate edited volume, Padilla also published his own section from the conference only under his name, leaving out Catharine’s. It is possible that René was simply sharing credit with Catharine here. Given her extensive editing shown above, however, it is equally as likely that she co-wrote the original piece, only to give credit to René in the public presentation. Catharine’s hidden influence is further confirmed by a 2013 account regarding her own book project *La Palabra de Dios para el pueblo de Dios* (The Word of God for the People of God).

In a 2013 interview, René recalled Catharine approaching him visibly distressed: “I don’t want my name to appear on the book.” René exclaimed, “How not? Why not?” Catharine retorted, “Well, why would I? I prefer that it not appear—I only want ‘Ediciones Kairos’ to appear.” René recalled his response as, “No, it can’t be.” The debate was far from over. When the book was “practically ready for the printer” Catharine returned to René insistently, “I don’t want my name to appear.” René described his response: “So I said, listen to (me as) the editor of Ediciones Kairos, not (as) your spouse—I cannot publish this book without your name—your

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name is going to appear.” René said she responded, “Well, you’re the boss.”

This brief case study sheds light on Catharine’s consistent desire to eschew public recognition. Because of this, studies on her influence must, by necessity, discuss her choice to work within her familial relationships. In the same way, quantifying Feser Padilla’s influence on René’s extensive influence and publication is significantly problematised. Indeed, her influence appears to be inseparably linked to René’s.

4.4.6. An Assessment of the Contribution of Catharine F. Padilla

Earlier in this chapter and in chapter three I expounded Padilla’s lack of social theological categories in the early 1960s as he wrote his doctoral thesis in Manchester. If in 1965 Padilla lacked social theological categories, from where did he obtain them? In that chapter, I argued that the same revolutionary university environment gave rise to both Latin American liberation theology and misión integral. Yet, context is never sufficient to explain the development of theological ideas.

In continuity with many nineteenth- and twentieth-century women missionaries, the themes of Catharine’s teaching and ministry were holistic. As Dana Robert has explained, “Even in proclamation-oriented evangelical mission agencies, women were the ones to undertake ministries of compassion. Women’s mission theory emphasised education, in the nineteenth century as the functional equivalent to preaching, and in the twentieth century for social liberation.”

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129 Robert, American Women in Mission: A Social History of their Thought and Practice, xviii-xix.

130 Ibid.
prior to René Padilla’s apprehension of social theological categories, Catharine was working among the poor, widowed, and substance abuse addicts (of course, in partnership with Padilla). These holistic themes also appear in her later writing. At the 2008 Global Connections ‘Thinking Mission’ Forum (the year prior to her death), her Bible study materials were distributed to participants. In them, she wrote,

Is the problem that there is something missing in the Gospel message to which these people have responded? Is the message that has been preached to them only the offer of a place in heaven after death? Have people received a truncated gospel that has prepared them for heaven but has not prepared them to live on this earth? Has the Bible been left closed up in our churches instead of touching the every-day life in the home, in the workplace, or in society in general – as well as in the church?

For Catharine, expanding the content of the gospel message was essential for impacting society. It is plausible to suggest that Feser Padilla’s consistent holistic ministry impacted Padilla’s own view of Christian mission.

Equality of gender roles within the home and the church eventually became a staple of misión integral for both Catharine and René. Ruth Padilla DeBorst remembered her mother “wrangling with him [René] over the translation of Greek biblical terms.” Catharine’s ministry and writing often focused on expanding

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131 Padilla DeBorst, "Catharine Feser Padilla: Bible, Bed and Bread: A Matter of Distance."


133 This conviction also permeated her work as one of the primary curriculum writers for the Center for Interdisciplinary Theological Studies or CETI, whose course are taught widely throughout Latin American churches.

134 Padilla DeBorst, "Twin Peaks: From the Padilla-DeBorst (unpublished support letter)," 2.
opportunities for women in the church and the home. Indeed, Ruth Padilla DeBorst wrote, “Her articles, book chapters and published lectures…focus mainly on the role of women and men as equal bearers of God’s image in the kingdom of God, the church and the world—something she so confidently modeled and inspired in her own children and in generations of Latin American women and men.” A literary analysis of René Padilla’s own writing on women and misión integral (which space unfortunately does not fully allow) reveals a progression of thought toward equality for women in the home, as well as in the church—for example from his first article in 1975 “La mujer: Un ser humano” (Woman: A Human Being) to his 1997 article “Hombre y mujer, coherederos del reino” (Man and Woman, Coheirs of the Kingdom). Padilla also hired former political activist Marta Márquez as female co-pastor in his Buenos Aires Baptist church—a move that both split his church and led to significant numerical decline. Catharine also preached on occasion.

When asked about the influence of Catharine on René with regard to women’s equality, among other issues, Pedro Arana answered incredulously, “[René and Cati] shared entirely the study of the Scriptures. Cati as a professor in Biblical Studies in…two seminaries. How could they not share the themes of women, social justice, among others?” Given René’s own repudiation of the social dimensions of the gospel in his 1965 PhD thesis, the confirmation of oral historical accounts, and in the

135 Ibid.


137 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 9 September, 2013.

light of other examples of a holistic emphasis among female American missionary
emphases in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Catharine Feser Padilla’s
significance should be included in any discussion of Padilla’s significance.

The story of Catharine Feser Padilla’s influence is necessarily gendered,
ultimately imbedded within her context of human relationships. Within the Latin
American contextual reality of male hegemony, and the pervasive influence of a Latin
American culture where women have historically been excluded and oppressed, Feser
Padilla emphasized a progressive understanding of gender, grounded in a theology of
the kingdom of God. Similarly, her multilingual editing carved out grooves for the
diffusion of integral mission themes—expanding the influence of both integral
mission and her husband René Padilla. Ultimately, this well-educated, bilingual
American professor condescended to her gendered context in order to prioritise
mission. The extent of Feser Padilla’s influence on the origins, development, and
diffusion of integral mission, however, may never fully be known. As Pedro Arana
elocutiously stated in a 2014 interview, “I think that René’s achievements are shared in
a percentage that we’ll never be able to specify with his partner, spouse, mother of
their children, English editor and loving critic.”

4.5. Conclusion:

139 Dana Lee Robert, Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World
Religion (Chichester, U.K.; Malden, MA.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 118; Robert,
American Women in Mission: A Social History of their Thought and Practice;
Manktelow, Missionary Families: Race, Gender and Generation on the Spiritual
Turn-of-the-Century China (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984); Eva Jane
Price, China Journal 1889-1900: An American Missionary Family during the Boxer

140 Pedro Arana, Skype interview and translated by author, 11 March, 2014.
This chapter has attempted to situate Padilla’s theology of the kingdom and understanding of the contextualization of the gospel within its intellectual and theological context. *Misión integral* was deeply rooted in Latin America and sprang from contextual realities that were unique to this social location. The toolkit, however, from which Padilla drew his contribution was the result of a global conversation that took place within conservative evangelical circles in the second half of the twentieth century. The contours of Padilla’s contextualization were initially formed through the mentorship and writings of Wheaton College professor Arthur F. Holmes. Padilla also drew extensively from the work of George Eldon Ladd and his theology of the kingdom, which he discovered in the course of his PhD research at Manchester. Thus, Padilla was not unique in his recovery of the kingdom of God as an organizing principle, but was part of a larger intellectual trend that took place around him—particularly in North America. Padilla’s writing also found critical continuity with the work of Scottish theologian John Mackay, who decried the importation of foreign theologies and called for the development of contextual ideas and national leadership. In doing so, Mackay influenced an entire generation of Latin American Protestant evangelical thinkers. Catharine Feser Padilla, drawing from a tradition of holistic service within American women missions, also exercised an incalculable influence on Padilla’s development of *misión integral*.

This chapter has not attributed his theology to purely Western theological influences or sought to export the credit for the rise of social theology within Latin America to sources within the North. Nor has it provided an exhaustive list of intellectual influences on Padilla. Nevertheless, this chapter has unearthed the extent to which Padilla’s formulation of *misión integral* drew on eclectic theological resources as well as on the Latin American context. The origins of *misión integral*
were, from its earliest stages, grounded in a global dialogue as diverse as evangelicalism itself. These origins reflect Padilla’s own journey—global in scope, contextual in impetus and application. This provides a helpful corrective to the current historiography on Latin American Protestant evangelical social theology, which has described this conversation as unidirectional.
Chapter Five: Padilla’s Role in the Formation and History of the Latin American Theological Fraternity

This chapter will consider Padilla’s role in the formation and subsequent history of the Latin American Theological Fraternity (FTL)—the arena in which misión integral took shape. The FTL emerged within a context of increasing tensions between Majority World theologians and global evangelical Protestant leadership. René Padilla interacted with a diverse network of Latin American evangelical thinkers through a process of conflict and negotiation. Indeed, paternalism appears to have been the operating paradigm in many Protestant churches, missionary agencies and seminaries in Latin America in the late 1960s and into the 1970s.

Correspondence between North American mission leaders reveals a sincere wrestling with the role of particularly North American missionaries in a context of increasing frustration with the status quo among local leadership.1 René Padilla’s plenary speech at Lausanne 1974, which excoriated the exportation of North American culture with the gospel message, was representative of both theological maturation and organizational restlessness.2 After Lausanne, the official Continuation Committee, led by Paul Little, sought advice on how the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association-funded Lausanne Movement could make headway in Latin America. Padilla’s response was telling:

A high percentage of theological institutions in this part of the world are still in the hands of foreign missionaries and that there is very little vision for the

1 See for example BGCA, Charles Henry Troutman Jr. Papers, SC 111, Box 15, Folder 15, “LAM: Correspondence – General; May 1975”, Charles Troutman to Don Sendek, 8 May, 1975.

2 For more on the increasingly multicultural Protestant evangelical global community, see Stanley, Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism, 155.
training of national professors. As far as I’m concerned, this is one of the greatest difficulties from the point of view of the need for the church to relate imaginatively to the culture. A good number of our theological institutions are carbon copies of the institutions in the USA. I have no idea as to how the continuation committee could do something about this problem. All I know is that this is one of the greatest problems to be dealt with.③

Rather than asking for more organizational help from outside of Latin America, Padilla lamented that Latin Americans themselves were not determining their own theological destiny. Thus, he expanded:

I don’t want to sound as if my greatest concerns were along the lines of a nationalistic emphasis, but I do believe, Paul, that the continuation committee will be next to useless unless it honestly faces the need for dialogue between the national leaders and missionary executives. Can some communication channels be created so that missionary work is done on a fellowship basis rather than on the basis of schemes in which manpower and money are the most important elements?④

Ultimately, Padilla was excluded from the Lausanne Continuation Committee leadership at the urging of Western and especially North American evangelicals.⑤ In response, Padilla increasingly turned inward to Latin America, even as his colleagues increasingly turned outward to North America for the locus of their ministry.⑥ By 1974 Samuel Escobar, for example, was already living in Canada as General Secretary of IVCF there. Both he and colleague Orlando Costas would spend the majority of their careers at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (now Palmer Theological Seminary). From his base in Latin America, Padilla posited a new model of global evangelical partnership where Latin Americans

③ René Padilla Papers, Buenos Aires, Padilla to Paul Little, 17 December, 1974.

④ Ibid.

⑤ See, for example, BGCA, SC 426 Paul Eagelson Little Collection, Box 18, Folder 17, Norman B. Rohrer (Executive Secretary, Evangelical Press Association) to Paul Little, 29 November, 1974.

⑥ See Escobar, "My Pilgrimage in Mission."

themselves would increasingly determine their theological future. Indeed, this motivation fueled Padilla into the 1980s, as he continued to call for an end to paternalism and dependence.7 This story began perhaps most clearly in 1969 as René Padilla, Samuel Escobar, Orlando Costas, and others resisted what they called “the evangelical establishment” at a BGEA-sponsored conference and thus catalyzed a rise of Latin American leadership and social theology that transformed global evangelicalism. How was Padilla shaped by this network and how did he, in turn, shape the network in his own image?

5.1. “Evangelical and Ecumenical”: Buenos Aires and the Asociación Teológica Evangélica (Evangelical Theological Association)

In the late 1960s, René Padilla’s understanding of what would later be termed integral mission was slowly maturing both personally and through his participation in networks of Latin American thinkers. On 4 March 1969, Padilla invited the Argentine Methodist and Instituto Superior Evangélico de Estudios Teológicos (the ecumenical seminary known as ISEDET) professor José Míguez Bonino, British ISEDET Professor Andrew Kirk, Spanish-born Methodist leader Plutarco Bonilla (Rector of the Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano in Costa Rica) and others to form the Asociación Teológica Evangélica (Evangelical Theological Association, or ATE), with the goal of promoting contextual Latin American theology.8 Padilla took this initiative owing to a perceived “vacuum” in Latin American thought.9 Yet, more

7 C. René Padilla, Mission Between the Times: Essays on the Kingdom (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 133-139.


than a vacuum in leadership, the first gathering of the ATE heard members speak of a void in the gospel itself. At the first meeting, Plutarco Bonilla declared, “The Gospel that we commonly preach in Latin America…is an amputated Gospel. We need to return to a recognition that God’s intention is to save men, not souls separated from the body.”

Through the ATE, Padilla not only deepened his friendship with Míguez Bonino, but also interacted with Plutarco Bonilla’s ideas of a holistic gospel. Similarly, Bonilla was at the forefront of a movement to transform theological institutions from missionary to national leadership. Bonilla had become the first Latin American head of Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano (SBL) when he was appointed rector in the previous year, in 1968, beginning a process of leadership change toward national leadership, away from the oversight of Latin American Mission, its founding structure. That same year, Orlando Costas joined the faculty of SBL. By 1970, within two years of joining the faculty, Costas had been named dean at the age of 28.

At ATE’s first gathering, Padilla presented a paper titled “El Debate Contemporáneo sobre Mateo 16:17-19” (The contemporary debate over Matthew 16:17-19), which sought to articulate a Latin American ecclesiology in the midst of what is arguably the foremost Roman Catholic text. Similarly, the relationships formed at ATE encouraged both theological reflection and called for Latin American autonomy in organizational and theological leadership. Padilla was prescient in utilizing personal relationships and networks for the purpose of

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12 Yeh, "Missiology of Orlando E. Costas," 42.
theological reflection with the ATE. He was not, however, the only one who perceived an intellectual and theological vacuum.

5.2. The First Latin American Congress for Evangelization (CLADE I): Networks and Negotiation

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association had observed the seemingly unchecked advance of radical theological movements such as Conferencia Evangélica Latinoamericana (CELA) and Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina (ISAL).\(^{13}\) Commitment to traditional Protestant evangelistic mission was waning in liberal Protestant circles in the early second half of the twentieth century. Perhaps most notably, the 1968 World Council of Churches (WCC) gathering at Uppsala radically redefined the purpose of mission as “humanization” rather than conversion.\(^{14}\) This meant “mission was being done irrespective of the church; the church was therefore summoned to ‘be where the action is.’”\(^{15}\) All of these missiological developments, along with pervasive and persistent Cold War fears, provoked the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) to action in Latin America.\(^{16}\) The professed goal of the BGEA was not power or paternalistic influence, but the “evangelization of the

\(^{13}\) CELA will be discussed in chapter six. For more on ISAL, see chapter two, pp. 65-69. For BGEA and CELA, see Salinas, The Golden Decade, 52-70.

\(^{14}\) Churches., The Church for Others, and the Church for the World. For a discussion of the WCC’s document The Church for Others, see Laing, From Crisis to Creation, 208-209.

\(^{15}\) Laing, From Crisis to Creation, 208.

\(^{16}\) Anti-communism was widespread among conservative evangelical leaders, including in student organizations such as Campus Crusade for Christ. See Turner, Bill Bright & Campus Crusade for Christ: The Renewal of Evangelicalism in Postwar America, 108. See also Gasaway, Progressive Evangelicals and the Pursuit of Social Justice, 9.
whole of Latin America.”  

The BGEA was motivated by both positive factors (sharing the gospel and reaching Latin America for Christ), along with negative ones (fear of radical, Marxist thought, along with wariness toward neo-orthodoxy). These fears were certainly more prevalent than a fear of the “Social Gospel”—though social Christianity remained suspect as a veritable halfway house towards Marxism.  

In response, the BGEA planned the First Latin American Congress for Evangelization or CLADE I. This congress would prove paramount for the acceleration of Latin American theological networks and social theology, owing almost exclusively to unintended consequences. Amidst increasing tensions both within and outside the Protestant evangelical community, 920 delegates gathered in Bogotá Colombia from 21 to 30 November 1969 for the First Latin American Congress for Evangelization (Congreso Latinoamericano de Evangelización or CLADE I). The title of the congress publication was “Action in Christ for a Continent in Crisis.”  

According to René Padilla, CLADE I was “made in USA” with scarce contribution from Latin Americans themselves. He called this “typical of the way in which work was done sometimes in the conservative sector.” Padilla had no

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18 Contra Salinas, The Golden Decade, 70.

19 CLADE, Acción en Cristo para un continente en crisis. Personal correspondence, planning and general papers from CLADE I can be found in collection 324 at BGCA.


21 Salinas, The Golden Decade, 76.
speaking responsibilities at CLADE, as he was seen as suspect theologically.²²

Padilla objected not only to Peter Wagner’s book that was distributed to all participants (discussed below) but also to the “pre-made package”, thirty-year plan for evangelizing Latin America, presented by CLADE co-president Carlos Lastra.²³

Lastra called it an “integral plan” to “evangelize Latin America”.²⁴

Undoubtedly our general plan should be to evangelize, to proclaim the word of the gospel, to convert Latin American people (hombres) to the gospel, to make disciples of the grand multitudes. The reports and statistics tell us of the progress of Latin American evangelistic work. This objective can be defined in terms of making a massive, extensive, amplified, integral impact on the great Latin American multitudes.²⁵

A North American neo-evangelical ethos was evident throughout Lastro’s presentation. Tellingly, the first objective was “to use means of mass media.”²⁶

Objectives two to four were “to concentrate efforts on children, adolescents, and youth,” “to vitalize the local church,” and “to help in the preparation of lay leaders.” Objective five began with what sounded like a social theological breakthrough, “To help reach the classes that are marginal to the church” but in fact defined this category, not as the poor but as the “high classes, intellectuals, government officials, university professors, union workers, leaders and members of cooperatives, members

²² See especially BGCA, SC 324, Box 2, Folder 3 for numerous examples. This would become increasingly clear as North Americans vetted FTL members during its foundation. See, for example, BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Clyde W. Taylor to Peter Savage, 18 February, 1970.


²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid., 73.

²⁶ Ibid.
of professional and civic associations, and so on.” However, the sixth objective “to clearly define the social and economic responsibility of the church” was inspired by Samuel Escobar’s plenary paper.

It is likely that Samuel Escobar’s “mentor” Alec Clifford had suggested him for one of the plenary talks at CLADE I titled “The Social Responsibility of the Church.” Here, Escobar expounded “the mission of the church and the social context.” Escobar declared, “We should affirm that evangelization is one of the tasks of the church, it is not the only task of the church and it does not end in proclamation” (italics original). Escobar, however, also affirmed the centrality of evangelization: “The comprehension of evangelization as the central task should not lead us to close our eyes to other urgent tasks…” Escobar spoke of an awakening of political conscience among the evangelical community in Latin America, spurred on by the work of British missionaries, who had helped them discover the “social dimension of the gospel.” For Escobar, social structures affected the church and the reception of the gospel—not to recognize this “disfigures” the gospel and “impoverishes the Christian life.”

The reception of Escobar’s paper at CLADE I was overwhelmingly positive. Padilla recalled, “His paper on ‘The Social Responsibility of the Church’ provoked a

27 Ibid., 75.
29 Ibid., 34.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid., 35.
32 Ibid., 38.
standing ovation and threw into relief the fact that a significant sector of the evangelical leadership in Latin America was fertile soil for social concerns from a biblical perspective.” Elsewhere, Padilla described the standing ovation as lasting several minutes. Escobar himself was surprised by the positive reaction, as he expected to be labeled a “liberal.” Instead, both Escobar and Padilla discovered that others were seeking the same contextual answers to sociopolitical issues. Escobar shared the credit with Padilla and the university context, saying, “My paper there on the social responsibility of the church summarized what René Padilla and I had been seeking to develop among university students and gave a historical and biblical basis for an evangelical approach to social justice.” Elsewhere, Escobar described his paper as “following a pattern that René Padilla had suggested in the field of IFES”, with reference to the social dimensions in it. Thus, Escobar shared the credit for his paper’s impact with Padilla and Padilla’s own theological methods.

Perhaps the most important development arising from CLADE I and Escobar’s paper was the unearthing of diverse networks of Latin American evangelical thinkers who were concerned with similar theological developments; Escobar’s paper was a small indication of the social concern brewing beneath the surface. This was manifest in a network that arose at CLADE I, including Escobar,

33 Padilla, "My Theological Pilgrimage," 103.


37 Samuel Escobar, "Heredero de la reforma radical," in Hacia una teologia Evangélica Latinoamericana: Ensayos en honor de Pedro Savage, ed. C. René Padilla (Miami; San José: Editorial Caribe, 1984), 64.
Padilla, Orlando Costas, Peter Savage, Plutarco Bonilla, Rubén Lores, and Emilio Antonio Nuñez. Lores was a staff worker with the LAM, and later president of *Seminario Bíblico Latinoamericano* (SBL) in San José, Costa Rica. Nuñez was Professor of Systematic Theology and Rector at *Instituto Bíblico Centroamericano* (later Central American Theological Seminary or STC). These connections would prove crucial for the formation of the FTL the following year.\(^{38}\) Above the surface, however, social theology continued to be viewed with suspicion.

Each participant of CLADE I received a copy of Peter Wagner’s book *Teología Latinoamericana: Izquierdistas o evangélicos? La lucha por la fe en una iglesia creciente* (1969, *Latin American Theology: Radical or Evangelical? The Struggle for the Faith in a Young Church*).\(^{39}\) Wagner was Associate General Director of the Andes Evangelical Mission in Latin America, and was on the planning committee of CLADE I. Wagner’s book was distributed free of charge to every attendee at CLADE I, denoting BGEA’s confidence in its contents.\(^{40}\) Wagner’s main purpose was to present the ‘dangerous’ strands of the predominant ecumenical theology, then to “criticize” this theology “from the point of view of the church growth position popularized by Dr. Donald McGavran.”\(^{41}\) Yet, more than taking on so-called “liberal” theologians, Wagner attempted to posit a contextual Latin American understanding of Christian mission.\(^{42}\) Wagner’s writing was a particular

\(^{38}\) Ibid.

\(^{39}\) For more on Padilla’s response, see pp. 149-157, and pp. 193.


\(^{41}\) Wagner, *Latin American Theology: Radical or Evangelical?*, 9.

\(^{42}\) Ibid., 10.
affront to Padilla and the fledgling ATE. Indeed, the quotation from Bolivian Methodist minister Jorge Pantelís (b. 1938) that Wagner attacked in his introduction read as if Padilla himself had written it: “The idea that the Church’s evangelization ought to be reduced to the ‘salvation of souls,’…is simply one of the worst heresies that we have to face in our times.” To this, Wagner responded, “His obvious purpose is to discredit the evangelical emphasis on the doctrine of personal salvation” and that it represented “a deep struggle for the faith, with the very life of the church hanging in the balance.” Thus, Wagner wholly rejected integral missiological emphases as contrary to Protestant evangelical theology and fatal to the fledgling Latin American Protestant evangelical church.

Wagner’s analysis also lacked nuance, lumping more evangelically minded thinkers such as José Míguez Bonino, Emilio Castro and Justo Gonzalez with more radical/ecumenical theologians like Rubem Alves and Richard Shaul. Wagner did acknowledge there was a “certain spectrum” of theologies and that his analysis “does not apply equally to all those who have associated themselves with the radical left.” He also wrote that Míguez Bonino “is considered by many as the dean of Latin American theologians.” Yet, Wagner criticized him for social engagement:

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44 Wagner, Latin American Theology: Radical or Evangelical?, 10.


46 Ibid., 27.
[Míguez Bonino] agreed with the liberals in their opposition to ‘the narrowing of the Christian faith to the purely individual realm and to the after-death.’ He applauded their call for ‘an active participation in society, for the abandonment of the pietistic ghetto, for the proclamation and realization of the social dimension of Christian redemption.’”

Wagner’s criticism of Míguez Bonino and Justo Gonzalez, as also indeed, the book’s central argument, displayed a bold rejection of social emphases in Christian mission. His final section “evangelical alternatives” highlighted Latin American writers from his own experience as a missionary and, in doing so, manifested a limited understanding of existent Latin American Protestant evangelical writing. For more progressive evangelical thinkers like Padilla, Wagner’s book was just one aspect of a noticeable North American stamp on CLADE I. Orlando Costas later wrote, “We were offended by the purpose, content and methodology of the book.” As a result, Padilla, Escobar, Costas, Bonilla, and Rubén Lores planned to write a book in response to Wagner. Months later, they abandoned this project in favor of later FTL consultations—though Padilla himself published a scathing article in response.

After the congress, Escobar reflected on the benefits of CLADE I in a letter to IFES General Secretary Stacey Woods: “From November 21st to 30th we were with Rene [sic] at the famous Latin American Congress on Evangelism. The many contacts we made were valuable. My paper about ‘Social Responsability [sic] of the Church’ was well received to my surprise. Apparently the conscience that we must

47 Ibid., 28.


49 Ibid. Padilla, "Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?." See also pp. 73-74, and pp. 193, 247-248.
do something here ‘while it is the day’ is little by little coming to Evangelicals.”

Escobar presciently noted the rising social conscience among Latin American evangelical leaders. These networks also reached beyond Latin America, particularly in the case of Charles Troutman of the Latin America Mission. Troutman attended and would later reference the lack of national leadership and contextual thought at CLADE I in his recommendation of Padilla and Escobar to speak at Lausanne 1974. Troutman, no doubt provoked by conversations with Latin American leaders, urged Lausanne convener Jack Dain not to repeat the mistakes of CLADE I. Troutman wrote:

I would strongly recommend that this steering committee consider…that the environment of the third world, and that the element of revolution is the natural habitat for the proclamation of the Gospel. I think a serious criticism that has been made against the speakers (with one exception) at the Bogotá Congress was that they all spoke from the standpoint of a stable industrial society, whereas the majority of ordinary delegates were living in the midst of Guerilla [sic] warfare and revolutionary governments. This is a subtle thing for those of us from the Anglo-Saxon world to understand, but unless the Gospel is proclaimed in this context, I am afraid we are not saying what we think we are.

Troutman’s experience at CLADE I impacted his understanding of the contextual theology of mission. When Billy Graham sought speakers for the Lausanne Congress three years later (through Jack Dain), Troutman saw the need for speakers such as Padilla and Escobar through a lens given by CLADE I.

Despite the presence of Padilla and Escobar, the actual declaration issued by CLADE I kept strangely aloof from the sociopolitical context of Latin America—nothing in the text spoke specifically to the Latin American context. The main breakthrough of CLADE I was not in its public pronouncements but in its facilitation

50 Samuel Escobar Papers, Valencia, Escobar to Woods, 19 December, 1969. The context of the letter seems to imply that Escobar was most likely using famous in a colloquial, facetious way here.

51 BGCA SC 46, Box 30, Folder 3, Troutman to Dain, 28 February, 1972. See also Troutman to Bürki, 11 February, 1974.
of networks of evangelical thinkers and in the awareness it created of the need for a truly Latin American-led leadership organization. Though CLADE I had good intentions, the most profound impact of the congress was unintended, due to the Latin American reaction to the cultural misunderstandings and perceived ‘pre-packaging’ of CLADE’s purpose and program. Years later, Escobar recalled, “We said, now is the time that we as Latin Americans decide who is evangélico in America Latina and what it means to be evangélico. And from there came the idea of the Fraternity.”

Indeed, at CLADE I, Escobar, Padilla and Peruvian-born British missionary Peter “Pedro” Savage met to discuss the need for the FTL. Thus, Padilla later wrote, “In light of the purpose of the organizers, CLADE I was a failure as the only concrete result was the unintended formation of what later became the Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana.”


Peter Savage, Samuel Escobar, René Padilla, and a few others met at CLADE I to discuss the formation of a Latin American evangelical theological organization. This ad hoc group reunited the next year from 12 to 18 December 1970 in the town of Carachipampa, located just outside Cochabamba, Bolivia—though in later press releases, the nearby city of Cochabamba was named for clarity. This location was


undoubtedly chosen due to Peter Savage’s knowledge of the retreat center from a Joint Field Conference in August 1970 of the Andes Evangelical Mission and Evangelical Union of South America.\footnote{The University of Edinburgh, Centre for the Study of World Christianity Archives, Evangelical Union of South America Papers, GB 3189 CSWC51/20/2/7.} Savage was a missionary with AEM prior to the merger of the two organizations in 1981.\footnote{For correspondence and charity commission documents regarding the merger of the British contingent of the Andes Evangelical Mission with the Evangelical Union of South America in 1981, see The University of Edinburgh, Centre for the Study of World Christianity Archives, Evangelical Union of South America Papers, GB 3189 CSWC51/20/4/4.} Escobar later recalled that the location was significant for another reason—the 1958 IFES “First Congress of Students” had also occurred in Cochabamba. The 1958 meeting was a turning point for national Latin American leadership in IFES—a foreshadowing of future trends in Latin American evangelical leadership.\footnote{Samuel Escobar, interview and translated by author, Valencia, 22 October, 2013.} On the second to last day of the meeting, 17 December 1970, the Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana (Latin American Theological Fraternity) was officially founded.\footnote{The English name was later changed to “Latin American Theological Fellowship,” partly due to the influence of Ruth Padilla-DeBorst. The Spanish word “fraternidad” does not contain the same gendered connotations as the English word “fraternity.” Thus, the English name was changed to reflect the gender-inclusive nature of the Spanish.} Savage took the lead in raising funds and providing organizational leadership.

The early search for contextual theology in the FTL was marked by paternalistic growing pains—though Savage himself was a positive influence in national leadership here. Savage and Padilla were trusted friends—Savage eventually moved to Buenos Aires to help Padilla found his Kairos Community.
They also co-pastored in the same city in the mid-1970s. Careful attention to archival documents reveals that North American donors were intimately involved in determining who should be included and excluded from the early membership of the fraternity. The first FTL consultation in Cochabamba was funded exclusively through American money—almost entirely through the Evangelical Foreign Missions Association (EFMA) and its Executive Secretary Clyde Taylor. American donors covered room, board and travel expenses for the congress attendees. For the majority, these expenses were not extravagant—board only cost $2.50 US per person per day. The main fundraiser was Savage and the treasurer was Peter Wagner. With money came strings attached. As a result, René Padilla was initially excluded, along with José Míguez Bonino, Orlando Costas, Plutarco Bonilla, and the entire faculty of SBL. This blunted the influence of holistic emphases—but only temporarily. Clyde Taylor responded to Peter Savage’s request for funds on February 18, 1970. In his letter, he made clear that carving theological boundaries was a paramount to his support:

As you know, there is considerable inclination toward Barthianism or neo-orthodoxy among some of our evangelicals in Latin America. I really don’t know where Rene Padilla and Bonilla stand on this. We do know where Samuel Escobar stands. Miguez Bonino is neo-orthodox. I think this is why


60 BGCA, SC 358, Box 7, Folder 7, Peter Savage to Clyde Taylor, 15 February, 1970.


62 BGCA, SC 358, Box 7, Folder 7. FTL Memo, Saturday 23 June, 1970.

63 BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Clyde W. Taylor to Peter Savage, 18 February, 1970. See also Savage to Taylor, 27 January, 1972.
we felt quite safe in having you and Pete Wagner involved in this movement to be sure we did not allow those who would compromise the authority of Scripture in their whole theological concept. Frankly, I am not interested in helping raise funds to get a group of theologians together who are going to condone neo-orthodoxy.  

Clyde Taylor openly wondered if Padilla was neo-orthodox and made clear his desire to exclude Míguez Bonino. For many North American evangelicals, “theological neoorthodoxy produced merely a more biblical-sounding version of the same compromised culture-faith” as theological liberalism. Gary Dorrien has summed up this point of view: “[Neo-orthodoxy] embraced the liberal dichotomy between faith and science, denied the propositional nature of revelation, and forfeited the objective truth character of the gospel.” As time went on, Taylor continued to place pressure on Savage regarding the need to exclude those who, in his opinion, leaned toward neo-orthodoxy. In response, Savage attempted to place distance between the FTL and the ATE. The latter was led by Padilla, and required “only” that members sign the IVF statement of faith—which Míguez Bonino happily signed. Savage commented that the ATE’s theological requirements had been outlined “naively” and that Padilla, Escobar and Arana were now under a false impression about Míguez Bonino being truly evangelical. Savage offered to

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64 BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Clyde W. Taylor to Peter Savage, 18 February, 1970.


66 Ibid.


68 Ibid.
circulate some of Míguez Bonino’s work “to make members realise where this man stands.” Yet, Míguez Bonino was not the only theologian who was suspect.

Western FTL donors and organizers initially sought to exclude René Padilla from the FTL. This plan was divulged to Samuel Escobar, who disapproved. Savage wrote in a confidential memo, “[Escobar] felt sore that René Padilla would be excluded and in a way feels that we are starting off on the wrong footing without him.” Yet, Savage concluded his memo with, “In spite of this, [Escobar] seemed willing to attend without René.” Padilla was eventually included, certainly partially due to Escobar’s concerns; it is doubtful whether Escobar would have proceeded without him. Some maintained their concerns about Padilla, and Wagner hoped that Alec Clifford would attend FTL I, as he “exerts a moderating influence on René.”

The leadership of Peter Savage was essential for the fledgling FTL. Early correspondence confirms Heaney’s assertion, “Amidst this internal strife, the foundation of the Fraternity would have been almost impossible without the sensitive negotiations carried out by Pedro Savage.”

In the end, 25 leaders participated in the first meeting of the FTL, including speakers Pedro Arana, Andrew Kirk, Samuel Escobar, Peter Wagner, René Padilla,

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69 BGCA, SC 358, Box 7, Folder 7, Savage to Clyde Taylor, Vergil Gerber, C.P. Wagner, R. Sturz, E.L. Frizen.

70 BGCA, SC 358, Box 7, Folder 7, Savage to Clyde Taylor, Vergil Gerber, C.P. Wagner, R. Sturz, E.L. Frizen. Note that Salinas cut off this illuminating final sentence. See Salinas, Golden Decade, 92-93.


72 BGCA, SC 358, Box 7, Folder 7, Wagner to Savage, 15 July, 1970.

73 Heaney, Contextual Theology for Latin America, 61. Both Padilla and Escobar confirmed this in personal interviews.
among others—Costas and the SBL faculty were excluded. Padilla presented a paper titled “Autoridad de la Biblia” (Authority of the Bible). Padilla’s paper was representative of a Latin American push to negotiate new theological boundaries—as Escobar noted above, “that we as Latin Americans decide who is evangélico in America Latina and what it means to be evangélico.” Escobar’s paper also explicitly addressed this issue. Biblical inerrancy was not an organic issue for most Latin Americans owing its connection to the fundamentalist/modernist controversy in the North (which largely bypassed Latin America), and the near ubiquitous Protestant acceptance of the authority of the Bible in a predominantly Roman Catholic region. Yet, for student staff workers such as Escobar and Padilla, working within the student movement meant proximity to global evangelical theological issues such as biblical inerrancy. For neo-evangelicals in North America in the 1970s, biblical inerrancy was the foremost evangelical boundary marker. The Evangelical Theological Society (ETS, founded 1949), for example, made assent to the authority of Scripture, and particularly biblical inerrancy, its only theological requirement. Once again,

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78 See, for example, Youngblood, Evangelicals and Inerrancy: Selections from the Evangelical Theological Society.
early controversy regarding North American theological boundaries challenged Padilla and the fledgling FTL. 79

Padilla began his plenary speech at Cochabamba with a sweeping statement: “The authority of the Bible constitutes, without a doubt, the most complex problem of all the problems that bibliology poses.” 80 Padilla’s paper had two main sections: the basis of biblical authority and the recognition of that authority. 81 Padilla wrote, “This presentation concentrates its attention on the problem of the basis, but this limitation that we have placed should not lead us to lose sight of the fact that in the final analysis the principle of authority from the Christian perspective is not the Bible, but the Holy Spirit who speaks in the Bible—the Word and the Spirit.” 82 Padilla’s argument was based on Bernard Ramm’s 1968 work The Pattern of Religious Authority. 83 This book was part of a series of works produced by Ramm in the late 1950s and early 1960s. These included The Pattern of Religious Authority (1958), The Witness of the Spirit: An Essay on the Contemporary Relevance of the Internal Witness of the Holy Spirit (1959) and Special Revelation and the Word of God (1961). 84 These books were heavily influenced by Ramm’s experience studying

79 Padilla was identified as “Brethren” at FTL I. See Horacio Bojorge, “El Debate Contemporáneo Sobre la Biblia,” Boletín Teológico 1, no. 12 (1975): 24. The delay in publishing the review here reflects the delayed publication of the conference volume itself.


81 Ibid.

82 Ibid. For more on Ramm’s understanding of Word and Spirit, see Dorrien, The Remaking of Evangelical Theology, 123ff.

83 Padilla, "Autoridad de la biblia," 123.

84 Dorrien, The Remaking of Evangelical Theology, 123.
under Karl Barth in the academic year of 1957-1958. Ramm took an entire year’s sabbatical leave from his teaching post at American Baptist Seminary of the West in Covine, California, to reexamine his theological methodology.\(^{85}\) Though Ramm never fully embraced Barthianism, Ramm would later call Barth “the best” evangelical answer to the Enlightenment, and asserted that Barth’s theology “may serve as a paradigm for the future of evangelical methodology.”\(^{86}\) Thus, by openly aligning himself with Ramm, Padilla signaled what many saw as a maverick approach at the outset of the FTL. Padilla wielded Ramm’s understanding of Scripture in order to reject inerrancy, though Ramm himself defended the doctrine in his 1970 work *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics.*\(^{87}\)

Padilla posited that the authority of Scripture is dead without the communication of the Word by the Spirit to the believer:

> The purpose of the authorized biblical ‘information’ is the ‘encounter’, the personal experience of the judgement and grace of God. The formal authority of Scripture exists in the service of the practical authority of Jesus Christ, but the experience of the latter is only possible on the basis of the reality of the former. The Bible *becomes* the Word of God by the action of the Holy Spirit precisely because it *is* the Word of God.\(^{88}\)

This is similar to the final words of his paper, which read, “The Bible *is* the Word of God and *becomes* the Word of God through the action of the Spirit. As such, it is authoritative.”\(^{89}\) Padilla’s argument regarding the nature of revelation and the ability

\(^{85}\) Ibid., 124.


\(^{88}\) Padilla, "Autoridad de la biblia," 137.

\(^{89}\) Ibid., 153.
to recognize that authority is woven throughout the paper. It is worth noting at this juncture that Padilla’s understanding of the authority of Scripture is clearly distinguishable from Karl Barth’s, who emphasized the existential encounter with the Word of God. Padilla wrote, “Here lies the error of those theologians who, in an effort to accentuate the existential aspects of faith, reduce revelation to an encounter with Jesus Christ and define the authority of the Bible exclusively in terms of the use God makes of it to lead man into an experience with God here and now.”

In his paper, Padilla posited not only positive affirmations but also refutations of popular Protestant evangelical understandings of Scripture. Most prominently, Padilla placed the current North American Protestant evangelical formulation of the inerrancy of Scripture in his sights. This asserted that the Bible is “wholly and verbally God-given…without error or fault in all its teaching, no less in what it states about God’s acts in creation, about the events of world history, and about its own literary origins under God, than in its witness to God’s saving grace in individual lives.” Padilla also made clear his thoughts on those who held to this understanding of Scripture. According to Padilla, the inerrantist “rationalizes the faith, ignores its existential dimensions, minimalizes the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. As a result he requires as the basis for the knowledge of God something that no one can provide him since it does not exist—a Bible without error.” By utilizing the phrase “internal witness of the Holy Spirit” Padilla echoed the Reformer John Calvin. Indeed, many broadly Reformed writers who took Calvin seriously could sometimes appear Barthian at the surface. “The biblical writers are not historiographers; their intention

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90 Ibid., 136.


92 Padilla, "Autoridad de la biblia."
is not to write a complete, <<objective>>, history that would meet all the standards of modern historiography. They write more from the point of view of faith, as people committed to their message." Padilla later clarified that this message “depends, among other things, on the veracity of the historical facts that are its substance.”

Padilla’s main stated concern was this conclusion: “The only absolute authority is that which resides in God.”

Ultimately, Padilla spoke of the irrelevance of the hypothesis of inerrant original manuscripts—for, according to him, the extant copies do contain errors:

In the final analysis, the only Bible that we have today, whether we like it or not, is a Bible about which the least that must be admitted is that it contains errors of transmission and (in the case of any version) or translation. Therefore, either we thankfully receive it from God as it is and accept it as authoritative, in spite of minor errors and with the faith that none of them affects the substance of the Gospel, or we insist on the necessity of an absolutely inerrant Bible and find ourselves without an authoritative Bible. There is no other alternative!

These “minor errors” for Padilla include ones of transmission, and could include errors in “minimal detail of geography, history, natural sciences.” Padilla quickly attempted to ward off criticism, however, saying that he did not mean to pass judgment on inerrancy. He wrote that his purpose was not to reject inerrancy, but to speak of the Bible in reference to the history of salvation, the revelation of Jesus and the witness of the Holy Spirit. Significantly, this last idea appeared in the

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93 Ibid., 127.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid., 125.
96 Ibid., 129.
97 Padilla, "La Teología en Latinoamerica," 128-129; Padilla, "Autoridad de la biblia."
Cochabamba Declaration. Thus, Padilla’s paper made a broad argument on the basis of biblical authority, within which his discussion of inerrancy occupied only a portion. A description of Padilla’s paper in the FTL journal *Boletín Teológico* highlighted Padilla’s desire to take Latin American evangelical understanding of the authority of Scripture beyond “a sad doctrinal superficiality” and posited a “theological comprehension” rooted in “healthy doctrine and Christian maturity.” Ultimately, the paper signaled a refusal on the part of Latin Americans to submit to the theology of both British and North American conservative missionaries, organizations and mission agencies—many of whom utilized biblical inerrancy as a litmus test of orthodoxy. Though Padilla certainly intended to challenge the evangelical theological establishment, he could not have foreseen the forthcoming controversy.

### 5.4. Questioning Inerrancy: Theological Boundaries and North American Financial Backing

On 5 January 1971, Peter Wagner was commissioned by *Christianity Today* to write a first-hand summary of the FTL gathering at Cochabamba. In his article “High Theology in the Andes,” he expounded a generally positive account—much like the accounts of other North American evangelical publications. His initial description of Padilla’s paper was straightforward, and accurate:

> In his position paper on authority, Padilla argued that insistence on an inerrant Bible means asking for something unavailable—since no present edition or version is free from difficulties of transmission and/or translation. The result, said Padilla, is the danger of ending up with no Bible and no authority.

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100 For a British example, see Padilla’s discussion with IVF General Secretary Oliver Barclay, IFES Papers, Oxford, Barclay to Padilla, 15 February, 1972. See pp. 262-263.
Exaggerated insistence on inerrancy, he added, in effect saws off the limb that supports evangelical theology.\textsuperscript{101}

While Wagner’s description may have been benign, his organizational identification set off a firestorm of criticism. Wagner identified Padilla’s paper with “what some called the ‘Inter-Varsity bloc.’” Wagner also tipped his hand by contrasting Padilla’s position with that of Andrew Kirk. Wagner wrote, “Not all were convinced by Padilla and his backers. Holding uncompromisingly to an inerrant Bible and verbal inspiration Andrew Kirk of Union Seminary in Buenos Aires declared in his closely reasoned paper on hermeneutics, ‘What the text of the Bible says, God says without reservation and without reduction.’”\textsuperscript{102} Wagner’s contrast was misleading—beyond belying his personal views on inerrancy. Padilla did hold to verbal inspiration and later protested vehemently against a supposed division between him and Kirk.\textsuperscript{103} Wagner, however, accurately described fault lines that arose between those who wanted to include inerrancy in the final Cochabamba declaration—Emilio Nuñez, Andrew Kirk, Peter Wagner—and others who wanted it left out—Arana, Escobar, Padilla.\textsuperscript{104} In the end, the response to Padilla’s paper, as summarized by Wagner, from \textit{CT}’s primarily North American readership was swift and overwhelmingly negative.

Soon after Wagner’s article appeared, Padilla told Savage that IFES had received “una lluvia de cartas” (a rain of letters), many asking that Padilla be formally


\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{103} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{104} Samuel Escobar, interview and translated by author, Valencia, 22 October, 2013.
disciplined for his view on the Bible. One letter from a reader in Utah explicitly referred to the Padilla controversy and received a personal response from IFES General Secretary C. Stacey Woods himself. Woods assured her that all staff had signed the IFES statement of faith “ex animo” and Woods rejected Wagner’s account of the event: “Personally, I do not believe that this man Wagner really reported correctly the situation. If you were to obtain a copy of the Cochabamba Declaration for which René Padilla was largely responsible, I believe you would be reassured and thankful.” Woods then provided an abstract of Padilla’s paper (no doubt provided by Padilla himself). Woods concluded with his personal endorsement of Padilla: “I personally am persuaded that René Padilla holds to a strictly biblical position.”

That same day (4 March, 1971), Woods wrote to Padilla to express support and reassurance, lambasting Wagner in the process.

My dear René, First, may I assure you that as I believe I understand your position concerning the doctrine of Scripture, I do not believe that you differ very much from me and I am not upset. However, the fact remains that wretched Wagner and his abominable article, willfully misleading in “Christianity Today” is resulting in letters coming in to us regarding the position of the IFES, yourself, Samuel and Pedro.

Fearing even further backlash, Woods requested 50 copies of the Cochabamba Declaration in English. Woods also wrote to Arana, Escobar, and Padilla, requesting further documentation of their views on Scripture. In it, he also continued to excoriate Wagner:

I really believe the wretched Wagner is malicious. If this sort of thing continues to spread, it could have a bad affect upon the work and its support. I want to do what I can, public relations wise, honestly and sincerely, to bury

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105 BGCA 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Padilla to Savage, 14 April 1971. See also Woods to Padilla, 4 March, 1971.


the ghost. I am writing letters to the effect that you subscribed to the statement of faith of the IFES without any reservation. I enclose this statement. I presume this is so without question. Have you any other suggestion as to how we could deal with these heresy hunters and troglodytes?108

Woods both expressed support and asked Padilla for further proof of his commitment to accepted Protestant evangelical understandings of biblical infallibility and authority—he requested statements concerning “a) divine inspiration b) historicity c) verbal inspiration d) propositional revelation e) infallibility f) authority.”109

Woods continued to receive negative letters from around the world, and responded by implementing a strategy of damage control. For his own part, Padilla also sought to minimize the damage. Padilla was defiant in the face of criticism:

I make no apologies for what I said in Cochabamba. The position expressed there was carefully thought through beforehand and when I stated it I very well knew that I was sticking out my neck and opening myself to all sorts of accusations and misunderstandings. Yet I felt that I would not be honest if I did not express my deep convictions that the big fuss that most evangelicals raise over inerrancy reflects a serious misunderstanding of the nature of Biblical revelation, tied up with a reductionist concept of truth. My concern was not to deny inerrancy, but to show that the question of biblical authority is an infinitely bigger issue than that of textual perfection.110

Padilla’s statement acknowledged that he understood that he would cause controversy in his rejection of inerrancy, yet Padilla valued intellectual freedom above organizational unanimity. Wagner, for his part, attempted reconciliation with Padilla, writing an open letter through the FTL in June of 1971, defending church

108 Ibid.


growth theory in the process. Wagner resigned from his FTL responsibilities that year, and left Latin America to return to the United States where he was hired by Donald McGavran himself at Fuller Theological Seminary (FTS) in Southern California.

Careful attention to linguistic dynamics here also reveals a more nuanced picture than historiography and Padilla himself have presented. Padilla defended himself publicly through a scathing letter to the editor in Christianity Today titled “Highly Misleading” on 9 February 1971—perhaps a play on Wagner’s title “High Theology.” Padilla also defended himself behind the scenes to Stacey Woods. He wrote, “Let me quote the paragraph on this question in my position paper.” Padilla then translated the entire paragraph from Spanish, while redacting various controversial aspects. For example, Padilla’s ‘translation’ for Woods implied that his point was one of textual criticism, extant manuscripts, and accessibility. Padilla’s ‘translation’ read:

The one that demands absolute textual perfection as an indispensable requisite for accepting Biblical authority makes this demand because he assumes that from an epistemological point of view the only controlling principle in the

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112 BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Wagner to Padilla, 13 May, 1971. For more correspondence regarding this controversy, see BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1. Wagner to Savage, 1 June, 1971; BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Wagner to Padilla, 31 March, 1971. For more on Wagner, FTS, and his later involvement in the Vineyard Movement, see Jon Bialecki, "The Kingdom and its Subjects: Charisms, Language, Economy, and the Birth of a Progressive Politics in the Vineyard." (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 2009).

113 BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Padilla to Harold Lindsell, 9 February, 1971.

relation of man with God is reason, and the only reality in revelation is its informative aspect.\textsuperscript{115}

The metaphrasal translation of what Padilla actually wrote and said at Cochabamba, however, was something quite different—especially for inerrantists themselves: “The one that demands an absolute precision in minimal details of geography, history, natural sciences, etc., as an \textit{indispensable} requisite for acceptance of biblical authority, makes this demand…”\textsuperscript{116} In the Spanish version of his FTL plenary paper, it appears Padilla was, at the very least, implying that the Bible’s accuracy in science and history was open for debate. The distinction for inerrantists (particularly North Americans) is profound: errors of \textit{transmission} are simply textual and would not affect the ‘original manuscripts.’ But errors of \textit{content}, such as historicity and science, affect the accuracy of the original documents and, thus, God’s words. This fluidity in translation can be seen in less controversial paragraphs, as well. Thus, the sentence above, “The [biblical writers] write more from the point of view of faith, as people committed to their message”, was translated by Padilla as, “[the biblical writers] write from the perspective of men who are completely committed to their message.”\textsuperscript{117} The juxtaposition between objective history and the subjective, faith perspective of the biblical writers, was redacted.

It appears, then, that though Padilla wrote that he was “ready to maintain [his] position and face up to the consequences,” he may have attempted to soften his stance.

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{116} Padilla, "La Teología en Latinoamerica," 129. \textit{Quien demanda una precisión absoluta en detalles mínimos de geografía, historia, ciencias naturales, etc., como requisito indispensable para la aceptación de la autoridad bíblica, la demanda porque...”}

after the fact. In the same letter to Woods, Padilla placed the blame squarely on Wagner’s shoulders: “I am sorry, very sorry for the extra work that Peter Wagner’s article is causing you. I must say that it is hard for me to believe that his intention in writing it was not a vicious one.” This provides a more nuanced picture of Woods’ subsequent defense of Padilla, and of Padilla and Escobar’s public denunciation of Wagner. Escobar defended Padilla, saying that Wagner “presented a tendentious and disfigured painting of our first consultation.” In Escobar’s opinion, Wagner had a malicious intent from the start—his article was intended to place pressure on them within the organization of Inter-Varsity USA regarding their stance on Scripture. Elsewhere, Escobar could not bring himself to name Wagner, simply saying he had “lamented the effort of a certain missionary for dividing us, polarizing us, and disfiguring our reality in writing a chronicle of this meeting.” In light of the above linguistic dynamics, the current historiography should also be corrected regarding this event.

Global evangelical networks connected Latin American evangelicals through mission agencies and, in the case of Padilla and Escobar, the global evangelical

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118 BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Padilla to Savage, 14 April, 1971.


123 Salinas, The Golden Decade, 99. See footnote 88. See also p. 102.
student movement. Though major theological issues were at stake, this prolonged
FTL inerrancy controversy must be seen in light of one primary factor: fundraising.
IFES staff member Alec Clifford wrote a handwritten note to Wagner on 19 June
1971, decrying the financial impact of the inerrancy controversy. “The repercussions
of your CT report have been most unfortunate and far reaching. The whole program
of IFES and IVF (USA) seems to have suffered through a loss of financial support
and confidence thanks to the article…I don’t know what can be done to undo the
harm at this stage.”124 The financial situation certainly motivated Stacey Woods to
implement damage control measures. That year, 1971, IVCF-USA contributed 67%
of IFES overall income and budget.125 Any drop in funds from donors in the United
States would reverberate around the world. Though IFES had movements in over 90
countries, financial generosity from the United States shared the overwhelming
burden of funding its operations.

This theological controversy reveals a few key points of historical
significance. The first is that Padilla had become persona non grata among American
conservative evangelicals well before the 1974 Lausanne Congress, because he had
become identified with the ‘wrong side’ in the inerrancy arguments of the 1970s.
Similarly, Padilla and other Latin American evangelicals had already made clear they
would no longer defer to ‘Western’ evangelicals for theological direction. Perhaps
most unambiguously, Padilla, Escobar and others rejected translating an English-
language congress declaration for use as the Cochabamba Declaration. Peter Wagner

124 BGCA, SC 358, Box 8, Folder 1, Alec Clifford to Peter Wagner, 19 June,
1971.

125 BGCA, SC 49, Box “I.F.E.S. Minutes,” Folder “General Committee (9th)
8/20-9/1/75,” “Minutes of the Meeting of the Ninth General Committee, 20 August-
1 September 1975,” p. 13. Special thanks to IFES General Secretary Dr. Daniel
Bourdanné for access to this restricted file.
had brought along the Frankfurt Declaration, written by Peter Beyerhaus and others in Germany and pushed for this to be used as the congress declaration of the FTL.\(^{126}\) Escobar reflected, “The custom was that the only thing we had to do was translate things and [it was] ‘ready.’ And clearly, we wanted to discuss and make our own.”\(^{127}\) Escobar’s recollection fits with Wagner’s own discussion of his missionary work in Bolivia. Wagner recalled, “So I proceeded to translate the Fuller curriculum into Spanish--and wondered why we had so little success in training effective pastors.”\(^{128}\) The Cochabamba Declaration was a small step away from pre-packaged, translated theology and toward national Latin American evangelical leadership. In their own Cochabamba Declaration, they wrote of the need to “obey the clear demands of the Word of God…within the complex social, political and economic scene in Latin America, to become a community which expresses the spirit of justice, kindness, and service which the Gospel implies.”\(^{129}\) Thus, social action appeared in the declaration, though positioned within *implication* language with regard to the gospel.

Soon after the declaration, Samuel Escobar exclaimed, “The very fact that we gathered here in Cochabamba to make theology is exceedingly significant for the Latin American church…We can expect to move ahead together, recognizing our


present differences, toward the formulation of a truly evangelical and vitally relevant theology-in-formation for our continent.”

Padilla and Escobar were emboldened and catalyzed by Cochabamba (both by its negative and its positive experiences) and looked to develop their own organizational structure to encourage the maturation of this nascent theology. The next meetings of the FTL would diversify the network, cement their independence, and encourage new avenues for Latin American social theology. When seen in light of the purpose of the fledgling FTL, Padilla’s theological negotiation fits a wider narrative of carving new avenues of organizational leadership and theological freedom. Indeed, similar scenarios would play out throughout the 1970s, as manifest by another CT controversy involving Carl Henry’s description of seminaries capitulating to liberation theology.

5.5. The First Evangelical Consultation on Social Ethics: July 1972

In October 1971 Samuel Escobar wrote to IFES General Secretary Stacey Woods outlining his plan to leave Latin America to lead the IVCF in Canada. Interestingly, two years prior to Escobar’s letter to Woods (one which took Woods by surprise) Woods had warned Escobar of the danger of North America stealing him from the “need in Latin America”, telling him to “it is far more important to concentrate in Latin America than to go to North America.” Woods expanded: “North America is like a great octopus [sic], with its money sucking people from all over the world to be speakers, regardless of the prior needs of the work in their own

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130 Wagner, "High Theology in the Andes," 29.

131 C. René Padilla, "La Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana: una evaluación crítica," Misión 7(1983); Padilla, "La Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana en tela de juicio." The latter engaged one of the first doctoral dissertations on the Latin American Theological Fraternity.
milieu. Hence, we have constantly got to be on guard against this sort of thing.”

Woods’ response to Escobar’s decision was one of obvious disappointment that he had not been included in Escobar’s decision-making process. Escobar’s decision, one that was also opposed by Padilla, set in motion a series of events that would have both direct and indirect consequences for the development and diffusion of misión integral. In anticipation of Escobar’s absence, Padilla was named director of Ediciones Certeza (IFES literature project for Latin America) and Certeza magazine. One of Padilla’s first actions as director of Ediciones Certeza was to organize the “First Evangelical Consultation on Social Ethics” from 5 to 8 July 1972 in Lima. Padilla invited Pedro Arana, Orlando E. Costas, North American sociologist Charles F. Denton, prominent Pentecostal Assemblies of God pastor Juan Carlos Ortiz, Samuel Escobar, José Míguez-Bonino, Emilio Antonio Nuñez, and Cuban-American Methodist historian Justo L. González, as participants and writers (many of whom had notably been excluded from CLADE I and the first FTL gathering). Padilla wrote that the consultation was “organized for the purpose of producing a book that would encourage the reader to ‘a life commitment to Jesus Christ, a

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133 This must be inferred from the tone of Escobar’s letter. See IFES Papers, Oxford, Escobar to Woods, 24 January, 1972.


136 Papers from the consultation can be found in C. René Padilla, ed. Fe Cristiana y Latinoamérica hoy (Buenos Aires: Certeza, 1974). The publishing date was delayed due to lack of funds. The book announcement appeared alongside a farewell to Samuel Escobar. See FTL, "Notas del momento."
commitment embodied in the Latin American reality.”

Given this purpose, the diverse group of thinkers was particularly noteworthy—conservative evangelicals such as Emilio Núñez and Samuel Escobar, an influential Pentecostal pastor in Ortiz, alongside ecumenically minded leaders such as Orlando Costas, José Míguez Bonino and Justo Gonzalez. Escobar opined years later, “No other ‘evangelical’ entity would have invited them.”

Ironically, the funding for the consultation once again came from North American sources, in this case the National Liberty Foundation (now renamed the Arthur S. DeMoss Foundation), an arm of the Liberty Life Insurance Company, in Liberty, Pennsylvania. The company was headed by Arthur and Robert DeMoss, Christian philanthropists concerned with the development of Majority World theology from a conservative perspective. Arthur Demoss was also an early board member of Campus Crusade for Christ. According to Peter Savage, the NLF funded the majority of CLADE I, but through Clyde Taylor and the EFMA. Now, in 1972, Savage gained direct access to the funds from the DeMoss brothers, who were less concerned with the actual theological content than social location.

The proximity between ecumenical and conservative minds provided an important context for dialogue—particularly around the topic of ISAL. Padilla’s own contribution to this purpose came in the form of a paper titled “Iglesia y Sociedad en

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138 Samuel Escobar, e-mail message to author, translated by author, 20 December, 2013.


América Latina” (Church and Society in Latin America), referring to the WCC series of consultations described earlier in the thesis.¹⁴² Míguez Bonino was one of the key players in ISAL; Escobar recalled that this juxtaposition between Míguez Bonino and Padilla “made sure the discussion was valuable and lively.”¹⁴³ Ultimately, the first event planned by the FTL proved to be particularly salient for the future trajectory of the fraternity. The inclusion of diverse thinkers enriched each side. José Míguez Bonino was asked to present a paper titled “El Nuevo Catolicismo” (The New Catholicism), due to his recent attendance at the Second Vatican Council as the only Latin American Protestant observer. In a recent interview, Escobar recalled the FTL recognizing Míguez Bonino’s “authority” on the topic of Roman Catholicism.¹⁴⁴ This reality also illuminates the extent and limits of FTL ecumenicity: Míguez Bonino’s presence signaled a broad evangelical tent that extended beyond most ecclesiastical and organizational boundaries of the time. In the same way, however, a Protestant was still the representative “authority” on Roman Catholicism, demonstrating that Latin American evangelical ecumenicity stopped short of including Roman Catholics themselves—a reality that largely continues to this day. Chapter six will expand on Padilla and an increasing commitment to ecumenicity. Here, Escobar’s recollection of the specific results of the Consultation on Social Ethics provide clarity on the wider commitments of the FTL: “From there onward, the FTL proved that in its task of reflection, it would not be conditioned by the missionaries and conservative mission

¹⁴² See especially chapter two pp. 64-69.

¹⁴³ Samuel Escobar, e-mail correspondence with author, translated by author, 12-20-2013. This will be expanded in chapter six, especially pp. 217-221.

agencies who wanted to impose a fundamentalist agenda. Gonzalez, Míguez and Costas brought a vision of ecumenical scope that enriched us all.”

5.6. The FTL and Theology of the Kingdom: The Second Consultation

On 11-18 December 1972, 27 Latin American evangelical leaders gathered at the Seminario Bíblico in Lima, Peru, for the Second Consultation of the FTL under the theme of “The Kingdom of God and Latin America.” In Escobar’s view, this consultation “continued with the same agenda” of the Padilla-planned Consultation on Social Ethics.

Indeed, he recalled, “René had convinced us of the importance of eschatology and of the kingdom of God for understanding the message of Jesus.” Padilla wrote that the consultation met with a “sense of expectation” after the first consultation in Cochabamba had “set a precedent for meetings of the Fraternity.”

Five papers were presented, by Emilio Nuñez, René Padilla, José Míguez Bonino, Samuel Escobar, and American Mennonite John Howard (“Juan”) Yoder. Padilla recalled Yoder as the only American member of the FTL—though in reality Peter Wagner was the first. In his editorial introduction to the published papers, Padilla described the participants as those “who believe in theology, but not in it as an end in

145 Samuel Escobar, e-mail message to author, translated by author, 20 December, 2013.


147 Samuel Escobar, e-mail message to author, translated by author, 20 December, 2013.

148 Ibid.

149 Padilla, El reino de Dios y América Latina, 7.

150 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013.
itself, but as a discipline in the service of the mission of the church.”151 These were followed by what Padilla described in the conference volume as “frank dialogue (at times until heated.)”152 Perhaps most importantly for the later development of misión integral, FTL II marked the first occasion on which Padilla publicly expounded his understanding of the kingdom of God after engaging academically with the concept in his PhD thesis. It is worth noting again the emerging independence of the FTL due to the inclusion of José Míguez Bonino, who had to cancel at the “last minute” due to illness.153 His paper was read by Professor Jorge A. León of the Instituto Bíblico de Buenos Aires. León was a founding member of ATE and Padilla later called him “the father of Latin American pastoral psychology.”154 León was also director of the Department of Christian Emphasis, Culture and Education at the YMCA of Buenos Aires (later its General Secretary) and was a Latin American delegate at Lausanne 1974, presenting a workshop paper titled “Guilt, Conversion and Modern Psychology.”155 Andrew Kirk later gave a series of lectures at the YMCA under León’s leadership, which became his book Así confesamos la fe Cristiana (This is

151 Padilla, El reino de Dios y América Latina, 8.

152 Ibid., 7.

153 Ibid., 8.


How We Confess the Christian Faith). Padilla called León a “very good friend” as they both lived in Buenos Aires and León would later participate widely in the Kairos Community, including publications with Ediciones Kairos. This theological forum encouraged fledgling dialogue on the relationship between the kingdom of God and the Latin American context.

The second consultation of the FTL gave Padilla the space and encouragement to expand his understanding of the kingdom of God. Indeed, Padilla’s reliance on his PhD research is clear throughout—especially as eschatology serves as the framework for the paper, the “‘already’ and ‘not yet’” character of the kingdom. This paper also formed the basis of a significant portion of “The Mission of the Church in Light of the Kingdom of God”—the final chapter of his most famous work Misión integral and its English translation Mission Between the Times. Padilla’s paper sought a middle way between two opposing sides: the dispensational, future-oriented eschatology of the kingdom (represented by Emilio Nuñez’s paper) and the “realized eschatology” of many liberation theologians and participants in ISAL. Dispensationalism, according to Padilla’s editorial introduction, “has exercised an incalculable influence on the message and life itself of the church in [Latin

156 Andrés Kirk, Así confesamos la fe Cristiana (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 1976).

157 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013. For more on León, see his autobiographical chapter in Jorge León, "Místico y racionalista," in Hacia una teología Evangélica Latinoamericana: Ensayos en honor de Pedro Savage, ed. C. René Padilla (Miami; San José: Editorial Caribe, 1984).

Padilla certainly had this in mind when he wrote, “The basic premise of Jesus Christ’s mission and the central theme of his preaching is not the hope of the Kingdom’s coming at some predictable date in the future, rather it is that in Jesus’ own person and work, the Kingdom of God has been made present among men in great power.”

Escobar associated Nuñez’ position on the kingdom of God and dispensationalism with the Scofield Reference Bible, whose notes Nuñez translated for its Spanish publication.

Nuñez had completed his Master’s (ThM, 1964) and doctorate (ThD, 1969) at Dallas Theological Seminary, which is known as a center of an academically rigorous brand of dispensational theology. These realities, coupled with Nuñez’ status as “a very respected theologian” throughout Central America, provided an “excellent” debate among participants.

Padilla’s concept of the kingdom of God and indeed the church itself centered upon the person and work of Christ. Under the title “the Church as the Messianic Community” Padilla wrote, “Jesus not only proclaimed the coming of the kingdom of God, but also interpreted his own mission as the inauguration of the Kingdom within history in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies.”

Thus, Padilla presented

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159 Padilla, El reino de Dios y América Latina, 9.

160 Padilla, "El reino de Dios y la iglesia," 48. Padilla’s own English translation of the work will inform the translation here, though the Spanish version will be the primary source—as it was the form presented at FTL II. C. René Padilla, “The Kingdom of God and the Church,” Theological Fraternity Bulletin, 1-2 (1976).

161 Smith, "Essentials of Missiology," 313.

162 For more on Nuñez, see Emilio Antonio Nuñez C., "Testigo de un nuevo amanecer," in Hacia una teología Evangélica Latinoamericana: Ensayos en honor de Pedro Savage, ed. C. René Padilla (Miami; San José: Editorial Caribe, 1984).

163 Samuel Escobar, e-mail message to author, translated by author, 20 December, 2013.

the mission of the church with both an eschatological and Christological framework. Padilla wrote, “The ‘already’ of the Kingdom of God defines the mission of the Church.”

Yet, eschatological tension was required in order to maintain the integrity of the gospel itself. For the first time, Padilla expounded his view that the mission of the church finds its nexus in the kingdom of God. Thus, Padilla wrote, “The Church awaits an apocatastasis, a restoration of all things, a new heaven and a new earth. That hope is an essential aspect of the Gospel; one cannot push it aside in the name of ‘de-mythologization’ without distorting the Gospel.”

Here, Padilla connected the broad scope of a “new heaven and new earth” to the content of the gospel message. For Padilla, the church carries out the mission of God in eschatological tension, reflecting the kingdom of God, and carrying a wider gospel message.

While Padilla urged a recognition of realized eschatology, he tempered expectations on the ability of Christians to change society. He wrote, “The Church’s hope rests not in the structures created by those powers, but in the new heaven and new earth ‘in which righteousness dwells.’ It looks at itself as a sign of God’s new creation, that new creation in the light of which it is seen that every human effort to build a perfect society holds within itself the seeds of destruction.” Padilla rejected utopian goals of building the kingdom of God and finding hope in regime change.

Yet, in the same paragraph, Padilla channeled Marxist language to excoriate evangelical social apathy:

165 Ibid., 53.
166 Ibid., 57.
167 Ibid., 61.
[Rediscovering Christian hope] must bring out the radicality of the ethical demands of the Gospel and shake out of their bourgeois complacency those second-and-third-generation evangelicals who have forgotten the Christian meaning of poverty, victims of a consumer society upon whose altar basic human rights are sacrificed. It must, finally, place the mission of the church within the framework of God’s plan to create a new humanity.  

At FTL II, Padilla built on his understanding of Christian mission that came out of CLADE I—his rejection of the division between social action and evangelism in response to Peter Wagner. Here at FTL II, he presented the mission of the church in starkly social terms, placing its center in the kingdom of God. His concluding paragraph summarized this well: “The kingdom of God is the starting point and the goal of the Church. It is a possession and a promise. It is an ‘already’ and a ‘not yet’, a reality and a hope. And the Church is the Church of Christ only to the extent to which it reflects in its life and mission the ‘already’ and the ‘not yet’ of the Kingdom of God.”  

Padilla’s progressive development of misión integral themes is clear here: from his PhD thesis, which planted the kingdom of God in his mind, to the FTL, which watered the concept and gave rise to his full theology of the kingdom, which, in many ways, bloomed in publications such as Misión Integral (Mission Between the Times). At FTL II, Padilla certainly benefitted from theological exchange and negotiation with José Míguez Bonino’s paper “The Kingdom of God and History: Reflections for a Discussion of the Topic”—a reality that will be expanded in chapter seven. Ultimately, the gathering at Lima provided Padilla with the opportunity to

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168 Ibid.
169 Padilla, "Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?," 139.
171 See especially pp. 211-221.
dialogue with diverse theologians and to share resources with more overtly ecumenical streams of Protestant evangelical thought.

The official goals of the Fraternity were also defined at Lima as follows:

1. To promote reflection around the gospel and its significance for man and society in Latin America.
2. To set up a platform for dialogue between thinkers who confess Jesus Christ as Lord and God and that are prepared (están dispuestos a) to reflect in light of the Bible in order to build a bridge between the gospel and Latin American culture.
3. To contribute to the life and mission of the church of Christ in Latin America, without pretending to speak in the name of the church or assuming the position of theological spokesman for the evangelical people in the Latin American continent.  

Padilla called these goals a “triple commitment—with the Word, with the church and with Latin America.” Above everything, Padilla later recalled this event as “important” due to “the rediscovery of the centrality of the kingdom of God in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.” Elsewhere, Padilla wrote, “It marked for evangelicalism the rediscovery of the kingdom of God as the basis for the mission of the church.” Indeed, the emphases at FTL II also became a central theme for the FTL in later years: “[The kingdom of God] became an axis for FTL theology and ministry in the following years.”

This diverse gathering was only a foreshadowing of things to come for the FTL. The same theologians—Padilla, Escobar, Míguez Bonino, and Costas—would continue in public dialogue throughout the 1970s. Other prominent examples include the second consultation of the Commission on the Life and Mission of the Church, held in Buenos Aires, from 13 to 20 March 1976, where all five thinkers presented.

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175 Padilla, "My Theological Pilgrimage," 104.
5.7. FTL III: Beyond Spanish-Speaking Latin America and the Aftermath of Lausanne

From 22 February to 5 March, 1977 fifty-five Latin American evangelical leaders from twelve countries gathered in Vila Kostka, Itaici, Brazil—nearly 100 kilometers north-west of São Paolo. The third international consultation of the FTL marked the first FTL gathering outside of Spanish-speaking countries and its first main consultation since 1972. It also marked a noticeably “pastoral” shift from more technical theological discussions.176 The gathering chose the title “The People of God” (el pueblo de Dios) as its title. This topic did not preclude the passionate debate and disagreement that had come to characterize FTL gatherings. Perhaps most notably, Escobar and Costas publicly sparred over the role of Marxist analysis in understanding urban life—a debate that extended beyond the session for over an hour.177 Costas objected that Escobar had not included Marxist social scientific analysis, which Escobar later attributed to Costas’ education and study outside Latin America, while Escobar had seen the negative repercussions of Marxism first-hand in the universities.178 While this was the first main consultation since 1972, various commissions had been meeting throughout Latin America—including the Commission on Biblical Theology, Life and Mission of the Church, Ethics and

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Pastoral Ministries.\textsuperscript{179} Many of the best-known members of the FTL also lived outside of Latin America within this period—including Escobar, Costas, Nuñez, Kirk, and Yoder. Padilla remained in Latin America.\textsuperscript{180}

The third FTL consultation was also the first FTL gathering since Lausanne 1974. In his FTL presidential reflection, Escobar explicitly connected the work of the FTL to the legacy of Lausanne. Here, within the FTL Spanish journal \textit{Boletín Teologico} Escobar was perhaps more critical of the aftermath of Lausanne 1974 than anywhere else.\textsuperscript{181} He wrote:

New voices, developers of a Biblical and theological ferment, to a certain extent unexpectedly, made their voices heard at Lausanne…in my very personal opinion, supported in part by my active participation in the organization of the Congress, leads me to affirm that the currents of opinion today in the evangelical world did not enter into real dialogue. There was rather a dialogue of the deaf. Those who expressed a renewal current from the Lausanne 74 platform, lost the battle in the organizational effort that came later.\textsuperscript{182}

Escobar later spoke positively of the “dialogue” at Lausanne in English.\textsuperscript{183}

Though Escobar was pessimistic about significant change coming from the top of

\textsuperscript{179} FTL, "Novedad y Promesa: La Tercera Consulta de la Fraternidad Teologica Latinoamericana," \textit{Boletín Teológico} 1, no. 2 (1977): 2. For a comprehensive list, see FTL, "Resumen del Trabajo de la Fraternidad (1972-1977)," \textit{Boletín Teológico} 1, no. 2 (1977).

\textsuperscript{180} Escobar, "Realidad y promesa de la Fraternidad Teologica Latinoamericana."


\textsuperscript{182} Escobar, "Realidad y Promesa de la Fraternidad Teologica Latinoamericana," 23.

Lausanne, he credited the FTL for providing “experience” from Cochabamba and Lima from which FTL members spoke.\textsuperscript{184} The pastoral work of FTL III, then, continued a trajectory of “questioning” their “‘evangelical traditions’ in light of written revelation.”\textsuperscript{185}

5.8. A Legacy Reversed: CLADE and Latin American Theological Fraternity Leadership

The Executive Committee of the FTL, which consisted of Costas, Escobar, Padilla and Savage, met in 1976 to plan future gatherings. There, as Samuel Escobar later recalled, the FTL leadership announced plans to hold the second CLADE—without notifying BGEA or any North Americans. Thus, the FTL essentially annexed leadership control of CLADE conferences, placing it under the umbrella of the FTL.\textsuperscript{186} In contrast to CLADE I, CLADE II capped the number of “non-Latin Americans” at 10% of the delegates.\textsuperscript{187} This was certainly the result of CLADE II being “entirely planned and carried out by Latin Americans.”\textsuperscript{188} CLADE II was also significantly smaller than CLADE I, involving 266 delegates who gathered in Huampaní, Peru, in November 1979. On the heels of multiple FTL consultations, CLADE II was presented in conjunction with and correction to Lausanne 1974—most clearly through its title “That Latin America May Hear His Voice,” a play on

\textsuperscript{184} Escobar, "Realidad y promesa de la Fraternidad Teologica Latinoamericana," 24.

\textsuperscript{185} Ibid., 26.

\textsuperscript{186} Samuel Escobar, interview and translated by author, Valencia, 22 October, 2013.

\textsuperscript{187} Padilla Papers, Buenos Aires, “CLADE II, 1978.”

\textsuperscript{188} Padilla, "My Theological Pilgrimage," 109.
Lausanne’s theme of “Let the Earth Hear His Voice.” Indeed, the selection criteria explicitly mandated the inclusion of only those who could “affirm the spirit of the Lausanne Covenant in good conscience.”

CLADE II followed two FTL consultations on the topic of hermeneutics: Padilla’s Kairos Community had sponsored the “First Conference on Hermeneutics” and “Second Conference on Hermeneutics” on 4-7 November 1976 and 19-21 May 1977 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Lausanne-sponsored Consultation on Gospel and Culture also took place in January 1978 in Willowbank, Bermuda (which Padilla saw as addressing issues he raised in his Lausanne 1974 plenary paper). At CLADE II, Padilla continued this emphasis on hermeneutics through his paper “La Palabra Interpretada,” which was an edited version of “Contextualization of the Gospel.” The CLADE II paper was then translated and published in the journal Themelios. Padilla’s newfound emphasis on hermeneutics came within what Brian

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193 For conference papers, see Kenneth Mullholand and Emilio Antonio Nuñez, ed. The Contextualization of the Gospel: The Documents of CLADE II (San José, Costa Rica: LAECPS, 1980).

Stanley called “the evangelical discovery of hermeneutics.” I will expand on the content of Padilla’s hermeneutic below and in chapter six, but suffice it to say here that Padilla put an evangelical twist on the “hermeneutical circle”, a phrase coined by Juan Segundo (though Padilla does not mention Segundo’s work).

Padilla sought to place dual emphasis on the writer’s historical situation and the reader’s historical situation. In his CLADE II plenary address, Padilla expanded, “The effort to let Scripture speak without imposing on it a ready-made interpretation is a hermeneutical task binding upon all interpreters, whatever their culture. Unless objectivity is set as a goal, the whole interpretive process is condemned to failure from the start.”

Padilla’s paper argued for the removal of imported Western categories and the inclusion of a Latin American contextualized hermeneutic and gospel message. It then highlighted the purpose of this hermeneutic: “the transformation of the people (pueblo) of God in their concrete situation.” The crux of the issue surrounds the gospel itself: “The Gospel has a foreign sound or no sound at all, in relation to many of the dreams and anxieties, problems and questions, values and customs of people.”

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196 See especially pp. 190-192.


200 Ibid., 7.
Thus, the solution is to return to the gospel itself: “The urgent need everywhere is for a new reading of the Gospel from within each particular historical situation” (Italics original). 201 CLADE II also released a “pastoral letter” which included robust statements on justice, oppression, exploitation, and marginalization. 202

Ultimately, CLADE II was important for the trajectory upon which it placed the FTL. Padilla later recalled, “At CLADE II…the FTL did not propose a strategy: it placed the seed of an integral mission, which was rejected by some of the participants and received with joy from others.” 203 It was CLADE III, then, that “has clearly shown in the decade of the 80s that this seed [of integral mission] has germinated…” 204

5.9. The Whole Gospel for the Whole World: CLADE III

René Padilla became general secretary of the FTL from 1984 to 1992, culminating in the organization of the third CLADE conference in Quito. Padilla had generally avoided official administrative responsibility in the FTL, due to his leadership of the IFES movement in Latin America for over a decade. Thus, his general secretary role in FTL was almost certainly due to his 1981 retirement from the IFES. Looking back on his organizational leadership at FTL, Padilla wrote, “I devoted much of my time to the promotion of this biblical and contextual approach to theology, especially among the younger generation. With little time myself for writing, I invested countless hours in organizing international and regional theological


202 Pedro Savage, América Latina y la evangelización en los años 80.


204 Ibid., 119.
conferences and editing collective works on a variety of subjects related to social ethics.”

Padilla’s stint as general secretary concluded with CLADE III, which he declared, “will undoubtedly mark a milestone in the history of the Church in Latin America.” Samuel Escobar also called it “the largest and most representative gathering of Latin American Protestants in our century.” CLADE III included 1080 delegates gathered from 24 August 24 to 4 September 1992 in Quito. Its delegation included prominent theologians such as Padilla, Escobar, Míguez Bonino, as well as younger leaders, including Mexican theologian Carmen Perez de Camargo, Nazarene theologian and economist Wilfredo Canales, and a handful of other young Latin American thinkers—the fruit of intentional mentorship by leaders like Padilla. The title of CLADE III was “The Whole Gospel for the Whole World from Latin America,” signaling a maturation of social theology that had been gestating for the at least the previous two decades. This emphasis on expanding the gospel itself was a fitting bookend to the first CLADE I. For Padilla, CLADE III was a dual homecoming: a physical homecoming to his hometown of Quito, as well as an intellectual return to the conference that birthed the Latin American Theological Fraternity. Indeed, much had changed since Peter Wagner’s polemic against social theology had pushed Padilla to articulate his own understanding of Christian mission. CLADE III also represented the rise of Majority World evangelical leadership, as both Anglican Bishop David Gitari from Kenya and Church of South India Canon Dr. Vinay Samuel attended. According to Escobar, they attended “representing African

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206 Padilla, "CLADE III: Un <<hito>> en la historia de la Iglesia."

and Asian Evangelicals who have been partners of the Latin Americans in the rediscovery of the wholeness of the Gospel, the search for new missiological paradigms, and the effort to express the strong evangelistic dynamism of their churches in a way that will recover the transformational nature of the Gospel.”

Chapter seven will expand on the importance of these global networks for the diffusion of integral mission.

Padilla highlighted three aspects that constituted the “milestone” status of CLADE III. The first was “The unity of the church” as manifested in ecumenical dialogue. Padilla noted that for the first time since their formation, four members of the previously polarized Consejo Latinoamericano de la Iglesias (CLAI) and Confederación Evangélica Latinoamericana (CONELA) engaged in public dialogue. In his important work Faces of Latin American Protestantism, Míguez Bonino agreed, “[CLADE III] went beyond the limits of the Latin American Theological Fraternity to become a truly ‘Latin American Protestant Congress,’ as much due to the breadth of its representation as to the wealth of materials and the freedom of debate. We were there present at a truly ‘ecumenical event…of Latin American Protestantism.’” These words are perhaps most striking due to their source—an ecumenical, liberation theologian describing the FTL-sponsored CLADE II as a “truly ‘ecumenical event.’” The contrast between CLADE I and CLADE III is telling.

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210 Ibid., 117-118. For more on these organizations, see Hartch, Rebirth of Latin American Christianity, 35-38.

Perhaps most importantly, a final “milestone” of CLADE II for Padilla was what it indicated for the maturation of misión integral in Latin America:

CLADE III has clearly shown in the decade of the 80s that this seed [of integral mission] has germinated and that today a broad sector of evangelical churches believe that <<the proclamation of the whole Gospel involves us in a creative work to develop more and better means of participating in society>>, and that when the Gospel is understood in its integrity (integridad) <<it is proclaimed in word and deed, and addresses the entire human being.>>

The “road” ahead in the twentieth century, then, would be one focused on the “mission of the Kingdom.” This trajectory of holistic mission, launched through dissent at CLADE I, continued into the 1980s and 1990s. The 1987 FTL gathering “Toward an Integral Transformation,” and CLADE IV both had clearly social theological elements that permeated the conferences and subsequent declarations.

5.10. Conclusion:

The Latin American Theological Fraternity was one of the key factors in the development and diffusion of misión integral. From its inception in 1970, it was surrounded by controversy and struggle as it sought to define a truly contextual Latin American Protestant evangelical theology. This early negotiation resulted in networks of Latin American thinkers across denominational and theological boundaries, as well as accelerating the process of developing misión integral itself. Indeed, from its inception at CLADE I, diverse theological sharing pushed Padilla to publish his own writings. There, Wagner’s book accelerated the development of Padilla’s understanding of Christian mission. Indeed, Padilla’s most lucid articulation of misión integral themes came in his response article to Wagner’s book, “Teología

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213 For a brief synopsis of the FTL and CLADE I-IV, see Padilla Papers, Buenos Aires, Argentina, “Tito Paredes: La FTL y el CLADE IV.”
Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?” in the magazine Pensamiento Cristiano. Here, Padilla presented for the first time his understanding of evangelism and social action as an “indivisible whole.” In this way, CLADE I had a clear impact on the social theological landscape of Latin America—even before it officially began.

Padilla’s passion was to edit and publish other Latin American writers—indeed, he published more than 200 books. He also had perfectionist tendencies that slowed his own publishing projects. Significantly, Padilla never wrote a single book himself—only collected volumes of his own previously published articles (such as Mission Between the Times). This tendency frustrated Orlando Costas in particular who pushed him to publish more freely and often. FTL consultations not only sharpened his thought, but also forced Padilla to publish his work. Ultimately, then, the FTL served as one of the most influential avenues for developing and disseminating misión integral to the rest of the world. Padilla’s proximity to such a diverse network of thinkers sharpened his thought and spurred him on to productive writing. In the same way, Padilla shaped the FTL in his own image, as shown through its early focus on “the kingdom of God” in 1972 and subsequent emphasis on social theological themes that continues to this day.

Looking back from 1995, Padilla credited the FTL with creating an environment that spurred the development of misión integral: “One thing is clear: the Spirit of God has used the FTL to encourage many Christians and many churches of

214 Padilla, "Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?."


216 Ibid.
our continent in a life of service to God and neighbor with a clear awareness of the inseparability of the Kingdom of God and history, of love and justice, of the spiritual and the material, of faith and works, of the personal and the social, of evangelization and social responsibility” (Italics original). Padilla recognized this holistic journey as one that ended in the production of integral mission: “If there is an expression that synthesizes this search, that expression is integral mission.”

217 Padilla, "La Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana y la responsabilidad social de la iglesia," 105-106.

218 Ibid., 105.
Chapter Six: Theological Exchange in the Relationship between René Padilla, José Míguez Bonino, and Ecumenical Protestantism

Historiography on Latin American Protestant Christianity has often divided individuals into prepackaged, binary categories such as liberal and conservative. Indeed, it has often pitted ecumenical and evangelical Protestant strands of Christianity against one another. While this narrative is generally true at the organizational level, it is often problematic when applied interpersonally. Yet, this is precisely how much of the scarce historiography on Latin American Christianity has framed the discussion.¹ This chapter will present the key relationship between José Míguez Bonino and René Padilla as a case study of theological exchange and shared resources between liberation theology, Protestant ecumenism and Protestant evangelicalism. In doing so, the chapter will discuss an organizational context that appeared in the previous chapter, while honing its focus upon this particular relationship and application. Recent historiography has either ignored the relationship or labeled it as a historical aberration—the most recent designating its inception to the 1990s.² Padilla and Míguez Bonino’s friendship, however, was marked by both longevity and depth: from 1967 onward, these two leaders, who represented diverse strands of Latin American Protestant Christianity, shared public theological dialogue, writing projects, phone calls, interviews, Argentine parrillas

¹ See for example Raimundo C. Barreto, Jr., "Facing the Poor in Brazil: Towards an Evangélico Progressive Social Ethics" (PhD thesis, Princeton Theological Seminary, 2006); Salinas, The Golden Decade.

² Davies, Faith Seeking Effectiveness, 31.
(traditional Argentine grills), books from their personal libraries, and extensive partnership such as through the Latin American Theological Fraternity and the Buenos Aires-based Kairos Community. Both leaders also crossed the theological boundaries imposed by their respective communities in order to participate in dialogue with one another. This was particularly important for Míguez Bonino, as he “preferred to test his own ideas and theological understandings within the milieu of group work.” If this was the process by which Míguez Bonino formed his theology, and his relationship with Padilla and the FTL has been both ignored and misrepresented, what might be gleaned regarding theological exchange between Protestant versions of liberation theology and Protestant evangelicalism in Latin America? Should narratives of polarization be problematized? Ultimately, how did Padilla’s relationship with Miguez Bonino and ecumenical Protestantism shape his understanding of misión integral? This chapter will attempt to answer these questions.

6.1. Argentina as a Shared Context

In the late 1960s, Argentina was at the tail end of a military coup d’état led by Juan Carlos Organía. From 1970 to 1973, multiple military governments attempted to provide stability in a tumultuous economic and social environment. After their failure, the Peronists called for Juan Perón’s return from exile in Spain (1955-1973). After a brief return, the frail Perón died of a heart attack on 1 July 1974, and the country was plunged into decades of repressive military rule. The military junta ushered in an Argentine era known as the Dirty War (though many Argentines object to this term because it obscures the reality of government oppression toward citizens.

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This term can also apply to various countries during this period). The sociopolitical context of Peru (from where Padilla moved) mirrored much of Argentina during this time: forces loyal to military general Francis Morales Bermúdez successfully overthrew the democratic government of Fernando Belaúnde Terry in 1968, beginning over a decade of military rule. Indeed, the vast majority of Latin American countries were ruled by military regimes during the decade of the 1970s. This shared social location provided abundant avenues for theological exchange.

6.2. The World Council of Churches and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association: CELA, CLADE, and Hidden Participation

The Latin American Evangelical Conferences (Conferencias Evangélicas de Latinoamérica or CELA) began in 1949 in Buenos Aires. For many Protestants, CELA I was the first Latin American-led Christian conference, begun without influence or impetus outside of Latin America. The second CELA gathering in 1961 drew influential ecumenical Protestant leaders such as Lesslie Newbigin, John Mackay, and José Míguez Bonino. Yet, the background of CELA II was a gathering three weeks earlier in Huampaní, Peru, from which the WCC-sponsored ISAL arose (described in chapter three). This gathering gave momentum to an emerging radical strand of ecumenical theology and caught the attention of conservative evangelicals

4 For more on Argentine history in the twentieth century, see Luis Alberto Romero, A History of Argentina in the Twentieth Century (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

5 For more on CLADE, see chapter six, pp. 148-157.

who shared much in common with more conservative members of CELA. By 1969, when the third CELA gathering was being planned, evangelical Protestants in North America were increasingly concerned with the direction of this movement. Thus, rather than an ecumenism that was often spoken of, CELA represented one side of a growing organizational chasm between the more ecumenical and evangelical strands of Protestantism. Indeed, José Míguez Bonino wrote, “Existing Protestant organizations with wide participation…either broke up or had to take sides in this confrontation.”

Samuel Escobar blamed the shallowness of evangelical Protestant thought for much of the division. He wrote, “I believe that if the (evangélicos) sectors would have done battle long before in efforts toward unity and cooperation, if we had been more serious in relation to theology and the pastoral (aspect) and less dependent on simplistic formulas, if we had learned to dialogue instead of escaping, there would be another panorama of Latin American Protestantism today. But by 1969 it was already too late.”

The “breach” between an ecumenical sector represented by WCC-affiliated agencies and a “conservative sector” represented by CLADE had already shown that the “breach was almost insuperable” by the early 1970s. While this division certainly was true in many historic organizations, it was not always true interpersonally or within the fledgling organizations that arose in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Historians have often taken the reality of organizational polarity and applied this data to individual leaders within the organizations.

Individual theologians are then presented in binary categories of liberal/conservative to reflect the organizations within which they moved.

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7 Míguez Bonino, *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, 44.

8 Escobar, "Heredero de la reforma radical," 63.

Historiography on CLADE I and CELA III has often been forced into predetermined categories of liberal and conservative. But this binary classification obscured the reality of ecumenical friendships and interaction. Raimundo C. Barreto’s 2006 Princeton Theological Seminary PhD dissertation is typical of this polarization (though it is certainly not alone). Barreto described evangelical dissatisfaction at the theological underpinnings of CELA III, including a group who succeeded in postponing the congress itself. “Despite succeeding in postponing CELA III for four years, the evangelical massive ‘invasion’ of that conference did not take place. Those evangelicals who did not feel represented in the theology guiding CELA III opted for organizing their own evangelical congress.” This congress was, of course, CLADE I, planned by BGEA out of North America, as discussed in earlier chapters. Barreto called CLADE I “the bedrock of the Latin American Theology Fraternity” and then turned to a speech given by Samuel Escobar. Certainly at CLADE I, the most famous speech given was by Samuel Escobar. Despite the efforts of BGEA and North American donors, and the perceptions of current historiography, the supposed polarization between liberal and conservative Latin American Protestants was only partially true. Padilla’s colleague in IFES Samuel Escobar has been raised up as an example of one side of this binary division. Yet, Escobar himself, unbeknown to North American leaders and, indeed, historians, was an official observer at CELA III and René Padilla attended (perhaps in a fuller capacity)

10 Barreto, "Facing the Poor in Brazil: Towards an Evangélico Progressive Social Ethics."


12 Barreto, "Facing the Poor in Brazil: Towards an Evangélico Progressive Social Ethics," 191.
at the invitation of Emilio Castro, later WCC general secretary. In a 2013 interview, Padilla spoke of a robust friendship with Castro, recalling multiple personal meetings while Castro was president of the WCC (1985-1992). He later accepted Castro’s invitation in 1991 to the WCC Assembly in Canberra, Australia. Padilla even recalled Castro offering him the editorship of the *International Review of Mission*—in Padilla’s words “to take over” the ecumenical magazine. Padilla expanded, “I wasn’t able to accept because I didn’t have time—it was a question of time. But for me, it was an important gesture.” He also clarified, “What I say here is not a theory. I believe in an ecumenism that really takes seriously the unity of the church.” Castro’s inclusion of evangelical Protestants such as Padilla was consistent with Castro’s contention elsewhere that “the ecumenical movement remains incomplete” without evangelicals. Padilla suspected that Míguez Bonino had pushed for his inclusion at CELA III, the start of significant ecumenical and evangelical collaboration with him and others in the WCC.

While the wall between ecumenical and evangelical Protestantism in Latin America was viewed publicly as insurmountable in the late 1960s and early 1970s,

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15 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013.


17 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013.
many private and personal events and relationships problematize this narrative. Padilla and Escobar’s theological boundary-crossing foreshadowed robust friendships and interaction that would mark the 1970s and subsequent decades. The question remains: is the current historiography correct in relegating Padilla and Míguez Bonino’s collaboration to the 1990s? Sharon Heaney, for example, has written:

The significance of [Míguez Bonino’s] contribution to the theological development within Latin America is appreciated and his work will be referred to at various points throughout this study. However, in the early years of the Latin American Theological Fraternity, the contribution of Míguez Bonino to that group was limited. In more recent years, his relationship with the Fraternity has grown and he is now a highly respected contributor to evangelical discussion.18

This narrative welcomes interrogation and a return to the years preceding the foundation of the Latin American Theological Fraternity.

While the previous chapter focused upon the foundation of the ATE in relation to the FTL, this section will highlight its importance for Padilla’s friendship with Míguez Bonino and the widening of evangelical networks. René Padilla moved from Lima to Buenos Aires in 1967 to begin work with Ediciones Certeza and Certeza magazine, the literature project of IFES. This stark geographical and cultural shift brought Padilla in proximity both to the unofficial publishing center of Latin America, and to influential writers such as José Míguez Bonino. Míguez Bonino was already gaining worldwide prominence as a writer and for his inclusion as the only Latin American Protestant observer at the Second Vatican Council.19 At the time, Míguez Bonino was visiting professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York for the 1967-1968 academic year. Upon his return from New York, Padilla and Míguez Bonino met through a mutual friend and immediately “started a new

18 Heaney, Contextual Theology for Latin America, 4.

19 See also pp. 58, 179.
relationship—a friendship.”

Padilla’s Buenos Aires home was also near Míguez Bonino’s church. Thus, in a 2013 interview Padilla recalled Míguez Bonino phoning his house at various times to speak about pastoral work and theology. Buenos Aires during this time was a thriving theological environment, owing, for example, to the presence of the ecumenical seminary Instituto Superior Evangélico de Estudios Teológicos (ISEDET). Padilla immediately began leveraging these new relationships for the formation of contextual social theology. Thus, after Padilla’s inclusion in CELA III, on March 4, 1969, Padilla invited José Míguez Bonino and others to form the ATE.

The ATE’s press release read, “The public meetings organized by Asociación Teológica Evangélica during their first year of existence have provoked much interest on the part of a select group of evangélico leaders in the study of a theme of vital importance for the cause of Jesus Christ: the communication of the Gospel in the world today.”

Soon after the ATE’s founding, outside events shone an unwanted spotlight on Latin American Protestant Christianity that exposed both leaders to criticism.

CLADE I welcomed both North American participation and funding for Protestant evangelical initiatives, including the FTL. This was certainly part of CLADE I’s positive and negative unintended consequences. Negatively, North American Protestant evangelical leaders were increasingly fixated on Latin America and its tenuous theological environment. Indeed, the flagship conservative evangelical

20 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013.

21 Ibid.

22 This is described in more detail on pp. 144-146.

magazine *Christianity Today* ran a series of articles on Latin American Protestant evangelicalism in late 1969 and early 1970.\(^{24}\) This newfound spotlight on Latin American Protestant theology can be explained both in terms of the incursion into Latin America of the BGEA and of the rise of social theologies, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, liberation theology and *misión integral*. Similarly, Míguez Bonino and Padilla were both connected to global movements—Padilla was on the staff of IFES, whose financial center was in North America. Míguez Bonino was increasingly involved with the World Council of Churches, being elected regional president for Latin America in 1975.

Both leaders faced increasing public pressure to carve fault lines between their respective theological communities. The nascent ATE was eventually subsumed into the FTL, which was itself a product of negative reaction to CLADE I. Though Míguez Bonino was a member of the ATE, he was excluded from the first gathering of FTL and later chose not to become a member (he would not become a public member until the 1990s). Each of the two leaders, however, invited the other to participate in their respective communities. After the first gathering of the FTL, Latin Americans themselves gained organizational control of their fledgling theological group.

The academic year 1971-1972 was also a year of transition within IFES itself. As Samuel Escobar prepared to move to Canada to lead its IVCF, Padilla increasingly took control of the publishing arm of the movement of IFES. Within this window, Míguez Bonino was interviewed in the pages of *Certeza* magazine under the title “¿Para qué sirve la teología?” (What Is Theology For?) Together, the interviewer

\(^{24}\) For example, Roberts, "Latin American Protestants: Which Way Will They Go?"
(presumably Padilla or Escobar) and Míguez Bonino talked of the lack of a Latin
American *evangélico* contextual theology. Míguez Bonino spoke of theology as a
communal act and the need for a new reading of the gospel for each concrete
historical situation.\(^\text{25}\) Padilla, thus, not only wrote publicly defending Míguez Bonino
as ‘safe’ theologically, but actively included Míguez Bonino in all of his theological
circles—IFES, ATE, and the FTL. Over a decade later, Padilla wrote an editorial for
his magazine *Misión* under the same title “¿Para qué sirve la teología?” and
channeled this language of communal theology and mission within history, as well.\(^\text{26}\)

### 6.3. Shared Context, Shared Emphases

Both Míguez Bonino and Padilla were intimately aware of sociopolitical
developments around them. Indeed, liberation theology prided itself in taking its
marching orders from the sociopolitical context. Padilla also consistently addressed
and was informed by this shared Latin American context. In 1974, Padilla wrote in
English in *Christianity Today* on the Chilean coup d'état by General Augusto
Pinochet, which deposed democratically elected president Salvador Allende.\(^\text{27}\) In the
article, Padilla implicated the United States’ Department of State as part of the plot
(Padilla noted in a 2013 interview that classified documents released decades later

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\(^{25}\) José Míguez Bonino, "¿Para qué sirve la teología?," *Certeza* 12, no. 45 (1971).


revealed this was true). He also excoriated evangelical Christians in Latin America for supporting the military regime: “As soon as the military had taken over, several evangelical leaders expressed their adherence to the new government. That God had directly intervened to deliver the country from Communism was a widespread view among evangelical Christians.”

Padilla concluded his article with the rhetorical question, “Will Christians ever learn not to try to enlist God under the political banner of their preference?”

CT’s anti-communist editor Harold Lindsell eventually wrote to Padilla on January 9, 1976 asking for his position on “socialism, capitalism, property, revolution, class struggle, etc.”

Padilla’s response, written five months later, channeled his experience at CELA III. He wrote, “You well realize that these are not questions that I can simply answer without opening myself to some kind of misunderstanding on your part. How I wish we had a chance to talk about them personally! The best I can do is to tell you as honestly as I can that I am not a Marxist, but a Christian, and I do not believe it is possible to be a Christian Marxist nor a Marxist Christian.”

While Padilla critiqued Marxism in his letter to Lindsell, he was not content simply to provide the answers he knew Lindsell wanted to hear. Indeed, Padilla’s signature style was to critique both the Latin American context and the North American one from which the question came:

At the same time, I have been critical of the capitalist ideology based on the myth of unlimited growth because I believe it is leading the West to

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29 Padilla, "The Church and Political Ambiguity," 41.

30 Ibid., 42.


32 Ibid.
destruction and offers no hope for the Third World. I accept that free enterprise (based on competition for profit) is empirically superior to socialism, but unlimited freedom becomes freedom for the powerful to exploit the powerless and unlimited free enterprise, therefore, becomes a curse. Man’s right to property is not an absolute right—a right that can be separated from man’s duty to obey God and to love his neighbor. My critique of capitalism is not based upon a denial of man’s rights in abstract, but from a rejection of the abuses into which the capitalist ideology leads sinful men. Materialism of practice is as devilish as theoretical materialism.  

For Padilla, neither Marxism nor capitalism provided the answers to Latin American socioeconomic realities. Thus, Padilla concluded,

What, then, is the alternative? Please don’t expect me to answer that question. All I know is that both the myth of growth and the myth of revolution must be debunked. We Christians should be the first in working toward the creation of new structures which will cut across the socialist/capitalist dichotomy and offer man a more human life. Unfortunately, we lack the faith and courage to be that. We find it easier to take refuge in one of the two myths, which we then try to dress up in biblical language.

This historical interaction demonstrates Padilla’s consistent desire to reject North American one-sided critiques that failed to recognize their own bias. Careful attention to linguistic dynamics here also provides connection to earlier ecumenical boundary crossing. In declaring that he did not believe one could be Marxist and Christian, Padilla was challenging the claims of liberation theologian Julio de Santa Ana, who at CELA III had declared himself a Marxist Christian. Míguez Bonino’s influence thus provided answers that informed Padilla’s own discussion with North American conservative evangelicals like Lindsell.

6.4. Wounds from a Friend: ISAL and Padilla’s Critique of the Movement

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33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.

35 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013.
After his colleague Samuel Escobar left Latin America to lead the Canadian IVCF in October 1971, one of René Padilla’s first actions as director of Ediciones Certeza was to convene the First Evangelical Consultation on Social Ethics from 5 to 8 July 1972 in Lima. Here in Lima, Padilla’s plenary talk (which I mentioned in chapter five) was a searing critique of “Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina” (Church and Society in Latin America), the series of consultations that were connected to the World Council of Churches, and operated under the leadership of Míguez Bonino.36 These consultations had become increasingly radicalized in the late 1960s and into the early 1970s.

Padilla’s paper expanded on a critique he wrote in July 1972 in the FTL journal Boletín Teológico, and within the LAM journal Pensamiento Cristiano in September of 1972. Padilla wrote in Boletín Teológico, “The last few years have seen the emergence of a theology that pretends to provide an interpretation of the Christian faith pertinent to the Latin American situation: the theology of ‘Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina’ (ISAL).”37 Padilla was not simply throwing stones from afar, but was interacting with what he saw at CELA III and in his many discussions with Míguez Bonino. At the FTL gathering, Padilla honed in on ISAL’s hermeneutic, saying, “The inevitable conclusion is that concentration on an ethical and political hermeneutic has resulted in a theology that does not do justice to the totality of the biblical witness.”38 Similarly, he rejected the use of ideology as its dominant hermeneutic: “In the end, ISAL’s theological problem is finding a hermeneutic that justifies a line of political action which has been selected from an ideology in

36 Davies, Faith Seeking Effectiveness, 23.
37 Padilla, "La Teología en Latinoamerica," 5.
38 Padilla, "Iglesia y Sociedad en América Latina," 126.
advance.”\footnote{Ibid.} As a conservative evangelical, Padilla wanted the Bible to provide both the theological framework and the marching orders for orthopraxis—letting interpretation be informed by the historical situation, rather than \textit{vice versa}.

In a 2013 interview at his Valencia home, Samuel Escobar recalled that this dynamic of Padilla’s ISAL critique and Míguez Bonino’s presence “made sure the discussion was valuable and lively.”\footnote{Samuel Escobar, e-mail correspondence with author, translated by author, 20 December, 2013.} This robust dialogue foreshadowed a public pattern of discussion between Padilla and Míguez Bonino that flourished in the 1970s. Míguez Bonino himself had already critiqued aspects of ISAL in 1969, saying, “Where is the church?” in the thought of ISAL.\footnote{José Míguez Bonino, "El camino del teólogo Protestante Latinoamericano," \textit{Cuadernos de Marcha} 29(1969): 64.} He also defended the use of Marxism as a necessary tool to evaluate orthopraxis.\footnote{Ibid., 62.} Míguez Bonino ultimately looked back with measured disapproval on what he called “utopian Protestantism.”\footnote{Míguez Bonino, \textit{Faces of Latin American Protestantism}, 24-25.}

Indeed, under the section heading “What to Do with This Failure?” Míguez Bonino spoke candidly about the need for “reinterpret[ing] and re-liv[ing]” this legacy. What is clear, as well, is that Míguez Bonino listened to and took seriously the concerns of FTL leaders. In his most famous work \textit{Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation}, published a few years after this FTL gathering, he quoted Pedro Arana’s paper from the Padilla-led ATE. Arana had written, “In the ideology of ISAL, God is translated by revolution; the people of God by the revolutionary hosts, and the Word of God by the revolutionary writings. Nobody will fail to see that all of this is Marxist
humanism.’” While Míguez Bonino ultimately disagreed with Arana, he also wrote, “We shall see further on that the criticism is not without significance. In fact, it seems to me that our Latin American theology of liberation has not yet become sufficiently aware of the weight of this risk and consequently has not yet developed adequate safeguards against it.”

Ultimately, Padilla’s own theological method moved closer to that of ISAL in order to critique it. For example, Padilla wrote, “The only theology that the Bible knows is a ‘functional’ theology,’ that is to say, theology in dialogue with concrete reality, theology in service to praxis.” Padilla was willing to utilize the language of liberation theologians even within his own critique of insider groups. Padilla also employed the language of “status quo” in order to critique both received theologies from the West, as well as Western critiques of liberation theology itself. Indeed, in his article for Christianity Today, which was the journal’s first article to directly address liberation theology, Padilla warned conservative evangelicals to address their own ideological biases before critiquing liberation theology. Padilla wrote in 1973:

The need for a liberation of theology is then as real in our case as in the case of the theology of liberation. In fact, aside from the grace of God all our theological reflection is always apt to become a subtle façade for our own ideas and prejudices; theology is turned into a rationalization by means of which we avoid obedience to God in the historical situation. The theology of

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44 Quoted in Míguez Bonino, Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation, 87.

45 Ibid.


48 Padilla, "Theology of Liberation," 70.
liberation should be a warning to us against the temptation to adapt the Gospel to our way of life instead of adapting our way of life to the Gospel.49

Though Padilla ultimately rejected ISAL and its method, which he found errant, he was sharpened by its stinging critique of the theological status quo. In his 1972 FTL article, after sidelining ISAL, Padilla concluded,

Then, where? Where is the theology that responds to the questions that the Latin American situation presents the Christian faith? Will we have to settle for repeating abstract doctrinal formulas, manufactured in other situations? The work that this historic moment imposes upon us is to reflect ourselves, Christians in Latin America, and discover the dimensions of the Gospel in our own situation. Until we do this, the Gospel will not be something entirely ours nor exercise the critical function that it should exercise in relation to the totality of life (underline original, italics mine).50

Padilla did not critique ISAL from an ivory tower nor did he posit in its place a fully-formed solution. Instead, he acknowledged the void from which ISAL arose, and called evangelical Protestants to fill in what was lacking. Ultimately for Padilla, this void existed in the gospel itself.

Padilla’s article in Boletín Teológico appeared alongside a farewell to Samuel Escobar, perhaps symbolic of Padilla’s role in fulfilling his own call. Here, Padilla wrote, “For the moment Latin America says a ‘GOODBYE.’ With bereaved sadness we lose one of our illustrious sons and president of the Fraternity but at the same time with pride we offer him to Canada as the first missionary from the Third World to this far away land.”51 Escobar would ultimately settle in the United States after a 3-year stint in Canada, as would Orlando Costas after a short period of study in Europe.

6.5. The Kingdom of God: From Public Dialogue to Hidden Story

49 Ibid.


51 FTL, "Notas del momento," 11.
Less than six months after René Padilla convened the Lima consultation on social ethics, both Padilla and Míguez Bonino were again invited to give plenary speeches under the umbrella of the FTL in December of 1972 under the theme of “The Kingdom of God and Latin America.”\footnote{Padilla, \textit{El reino de Dios y América Latina}, 7.} Perhaps most prominently for the purposes here, this included much wider participation than FTL I—including José Míguez Bonino and Orlando Costas, both of whom had been excluded, primarily through the influence of North American financial supporters. Costas wrote that Padilla and Escobar had protested at his exclusion from FTL I along with that of other Seminario Bíblico professors. According to Costas, Escobar and Padilla “insisted that the doors be opened so that we could enter into a new theological friendship.”\footnote{Costas, "Teólogo en la encrucijada," 25.} Costas expanded, “From this moment, my theological reflection has been linked to the itinerary of the Fraternity.”\footnote{Ibid.} As discussed in chapter 4, Padilla had begun exploring the kingdom of God as a theme in his PhD thesis. However, he had yet to expound his own understanding of the concept. Similarly, though Míguez Bonino would later write extensively on the theme, he had also yet to address the topic exclusively in a public forum. Indeed, Míguez Bonino’s first two titles on the kingdom of God appeared in Protestant evangelical settings: the first for \textit{Cuadernos Teológicos}, though Míguez Bonino had certainly referenced the theme prior to this gathering.\footnote{José Míguez Bonino, "Fundamentos teológicos de la responsabilidad social de la iglesia," in \textit{La responsabilidad social del Cristiano}, ed. Rodolfo Obermüller (Buenos Aires: Montevideo, 1964).} Padilla wrote in the introduction to the conference volume, “The paper by Míguez Bonino was probably the most debated of all.”\footnote{Padilla wrote in the introduction to the conference volume, “The paper by Míguez Bonino was probably the most debated of all.”}
Padilla and Míguez Bonino’s conceptions of the kingdom of God agreed at many points. At FTL II, they clashed at the point of participation in the kingdom—who can participate and who is part of it? In his paper, Míguez Bonino sought to show “how we can understand the active presence of the kingdom in our history in such a way that we are able to adapt our testimony and action to it, particularly in this concrete hour of Latin America which we have been given to profess our faith and service to the Lord” (italics original). He argued that Christians must name and manifest the kingdom of God. This takes the form of obedience in “doctrinal and ideological mediations.” He then described the “mediations” in this way: “These mediations are of two orders. On the one hand, there is our understanding of Scripture, of the gospel and the ‘rationality’ or instruments of theological hermeneutics that we use. On the other hand there is our understanding of the context.” For Míguez Bonino these instruments principally included Marxism and social scientific analysis. There was no place for “neutrality” in regard to history—one must choose sides and take action.

56 Padilla, El reino de dios y América Latina, 10.


59 Míguez Bonino, "El reino de Dios y la historia," 86.

60 Ibid.
On eschatology, Míguez Bonino deferred to Padilla and mentioned that he “fully” agreed with the eschatological position presented in Padilla’s paper. Padilla situated the kingdom of God within a framework of the “already” and the “not yet.” But on the relationship between the church and the kingdom of God, Míguez Bonino strongly objected to Padilla’s formulation. Míguez Bonino pitted Padilla against what he called “the Protestants of the sixteenth-century Reformation” and “the case in the Old Testament.” Referring to this latter group, he argued that God “manifests his sovereignty in the world even through people who do not profess his name; and he also carries out his work through them.” Thus, this participation in the kingdom of God was open to non-Christians as well as Christians, though the former would not name it so. For Míguez Bonino, participation in the kingdom of God is not confined to the community of believers, or believers themselves. Padilla, on the other hand, argued that the church mediated the kingdom of God to the world and reserved participation in the kingdom for believers.

In giving priority to praxis, he placed himself squarely within the liberation theological methodology. Yet, he cautioned theologians who shared his concern to historicize the kingdom of God.

In general, we speak of ‘love’, of ‘the new man’, of ‘liberation’, as languages that permit us to identify the active sovereignty of God in history, the redeeming presence of Jesus Christ and, consequently, the call and convocation of the obedience of faith… it is in these transcriptions that the risk appears, for once we do historicize these terms in the general history of humankind, there is a danger that they will be uprooted from the particular history of the faith and hence dehistoricized with respect to it. We may soon be talking about ‘love’ or ‘new person’ or ‘liberation’ in which reference to

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61 Ibid., 76.

62 Ibid., 82; Míguez Bonino says something similar in Míguez Bonino, "Historical Praxis and Christian Identity," 282.

63 Padilla, "El reino de Dios y la iglesia," 46ff.
the history of special revelation, and particularly to Jesus Christ, is secondary, merely exemplary, and even dispensable. In Christian terms, if that happens, reference to God himself has lost its content. Of what God are we speaking? And of what kingdom?  

Míguez Bonino was clearly concerned with maintaining the Christian character of praxis. This dialogue revealed key concerns of both thinkers. Padilla had pushed Míguez Bonino on the eschatological character of the kingdom of God, along with the church’s central role in mediating the kingdom.

Paul Davies has acknowledged the influence of the Latin American Theological Fraternity on Míguez Bonino’s conception of the kingdom of God: “In the nineteen seventies, he was in dialogue with a vast array of theologians and theological positions which were influential in challenging his existing theology of the Kingdom. Among these were, of course, the liberation theologians, Jürgen Moltmann, the Latin American Theological Fraternity, and the CWME (Commission on World Mission and Evangelism—of the WCC).” Unfortunately, very few outside of a small group of Latin American evangelicals were ever aware of these encounters. Míguez Bonino’s reflection and dialogue here with the Latin American Theological Fraternity would later be conducted on a wider stage in dialogue with Roman Catholic and ecumenical liberation theologians. Indeed, this paper was reproduced in large part in the 1975 work *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*, alongside essays by Rubem Alves, Hugo Assman, Leonardo Boff, Gustavo Gutiérrez, Juan Luis Segundo and others. Míguez Bonino’s FTL paper was later published in the

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66 Gibellini, *Frontiers of Theology in Latin America*. 
conference volume and elsewhere. It also formed the basis of chapter seven of his most famous book, Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation (1975). The dependence is clear and in fact, large sections are simply translations of his FTL paper. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of translation and adaptation of Míguez Bonino’s FTL paper is in his redaction of the text. Tellingly, in the 1975 work with liberation theologians, Míguez Bonino made no mention of the FTL roots of the paper and removed his interaction with Padilla from the body of the text to the endnotes. It does contain a lengthy interaction with Jürgen Moltmann, however. He also softens certain emphases, such as his specific allusion to the Christian character of orthopraxis, removing “particularly to Jesus Christ” for the SCM publication. In Doing Theology in a Revolutionary Situation, an endnote referring to the edited conference volume is the only indication of its roots (though the conference itself is not mentioned). Perhaps historical context can illuminate the situation.

In 1975, the year Frontiers of Theology in Latin America was published, Míguez Bonino was elected regional president of the WCC. In a 2013 interview, René Padilla recalled Míguez Bonino receiving more scrutiny for his interaction with him:

At this time, people knew he was ecumenical and part of the WCC. And when he became the president of the WCC…He entered a very difficult situation. Because the word “ecumenical” is a bad word—especially from the

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68 Mario Aguilar called this book Míguez Bonino’s “seminal work.” Aguilar, The History and Politics of Latin American Theology, 1, 61. The title Revolutionary Theology Comes of Age reflects the UK title.

United States. So, there was a problem. But it wasn’t just from the side of evangelicals (evangélicos) but also from the side of the ecumenicals.70

This interaction and subsequent redaction reveals multiple noteworthy points. The first is that Míguez Bonino was clearly concerned by the prospect of being publicly associated with evangelical Protestants, though privately he participated in robust theological discussions that sharpened both him and Padilla. Perhaps more importantly for understanding the development of misión integral, one is able to see that leaders on both sides of the theological divide, both conservative evangelicals and ecumenical Protestants, were wary of being publicly associated with René Padilla. Thus, he faced multifaceted exclusion. The path to integral mission was often a lonely one—one marked by rejection, exclusion and negotiation. The budding friendship between Padilla and Míguez Bonino was soon also contested within North American evangelical Protestantism, as well. Many were wary of Míguez Bonino’s ecumenical leanings and perceived neo-orthodox sympathies. Padilla and Míguez Bonino utilized divergent methods for contesting this pressure. Míguez Bonino avoided official membership in the FTL in order to continue participation in both Protestant ecumenical and evangelical circles. Padilla, on the other hand, publicly negotiated power in the public square within influential circles of North American Protestant evangelicalism, such as Christianity Today magazine.

Earlier chapters have discussed CLADE I and the firestorm of controversy surrounding Peter Wagner. Padilla took issue with more than Wagner’s rejection of social theological emphases; he vehemently opposed Wagner for misrepresenting and labeling his friend José Míguez Bonino. Padilla realized that there were few evangelically minded theologians who shared this journey toward wider dimensions

70 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013.
of the gospel: “It is high time that we who take pride in calling ourselves
‘Evangelicals’ recognize that the very absence of qualified theologians among us in
Latin America is the natural result of our amputation of the Gospel, our lack of
concern to teach ‘the whole counsel of God,’ our constant separation of the kerygma
from the didache.”

Padilla recognized the scarcity of theologians concerned for
social theology in Latin America. Thus, he viewed attacks on Míguez Bonino as an
attack on both himself and his few companions. Ultimately, Padilla did not simply
defend Míguez Bonino with words—he defended him with actions. Padilla included
Míguez Bonino in FTL gatherings throughout the 1970s onward. Indeed, Míguez
Bonino’s presentation of plenary papers and participation in dialogue revealed
Padilla’s conviction regarding inclusion and ecumenicity had moved beyond ideas to
concrete praxis.

### 6.6. Ecumenical and Evangelical: Two Case Studies of Self-Identification

In the course of their respective lives, Míguez Bonino increasingly identified
himself as evangelical, while Padilla increasingly identified himself as ecumenical.
During the 1970s, when Padilla was certainly influencing Míguez Bonino with regard
to evangelical Protestant themes, Míguez Bonino was writing widely on ecumenism.

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72 For example, José Míguez Bonino, "Comments 'Unity of the Church - Unity
cristiana y reconciliación social: coincidencia y tensión," Cuadernos de Teología 2,
no. 2 (1972). José Míguez Bonino, "Christian Unity and Social Reconciliation:
Consonance and Tension," Study Encounter 9, no. 1 (1973); José Míguez Bonino, "A
Latin American Attempt to Locate the Question of Unity," The Ecumenical Review
Pastoral 9, no. 95/96 (1976).
Padilla recalled Míguez Bonino becoming disillusioned with what eventually became of ISAL.  

In his 1993 Carnahan Lectures at the ecumenical seminary ISEDET, Míguez Bonino was candid in his self-reflection on labels and theological camps. He wrote, 

I have been variously tagged a conservative, a revolutionary, a Barthian, a liberal, a catholic, a ‘moderate,’ and a liberationist. Probably there is truth in all of these. It is not for me to decide. However, when I do attempt to define myself in my innermost being, what ‘comes from within’ is that I am evangélico. It seems that it is in this soil that my religious life and ecclesiastical activity have been rooted throughout more than seventy years. From this origin have sprung the joys and the conflicts, the satisfactions and the frustrations which over time have been knit together. There my deepest friendships, and also the most painful separations, were engendered; there lie the memories of dead ones I loved and the hope of generations I have seen born and grow. Whether in truth I am evangélico is not for me to say. Nor am I concerned that others affirm or deny it. What I am truly belongs to the grace of God. At least an evangélico is what I have always wanted to be.

Míguez Bonino located his “deepest friendships” within the evangélico community—a community that he describes engendered complex negotiations of belonging. Yet, Míguez Bonino’s diverse ecumenical participation invites the question: which community exactly was he identifying with? He was clearly describing more than the WCC and ISAL communities, for his membership in those communities was uncontested. His chapter on the “evangelical face” of Latin American Protestantism clarifies his self-identification.

Míguez Bonino concluded his chapter “The Evangelical Face of Latin American Protestantism” by highlighting the Latin American Theological Fraternity. Here, Míguez Bonino wrote, “[T]he evangelical renewal…in Latin America, has been represented mainly by the Latin American Theological Fraternity, which we associate with the names of René Padilla, Peter Savage, Samuel Escobar, Pedro Arana, Emilio A. Nuñez, and many others, and which has exerted an ever growing weight in the

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73 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013. See also below the discussion of CLADE III.
Miguez Bonino highlighted the FTL as “the way out” of social quietism and dispensational trends in Latin American evangelical history. Miguez Bonino then turned to highlight what he called the “most significant features” of the FTL. These included a retrieval and recovery of “an evangelical tradition, linked especially to the Anabaptist movement…and to the evangelical awakening of the eighteenth century in England and the United States.” He then concluded, “The work of Escobar, Arana, and Padilla shows us that this is not a mere vindication of a tradition but rather a search for elements that can fertilize theological reflection and evangelical practice for today’s Latin America.” The second aspect Miguez Bonino highlighted was its emphasis on “the centrality of Scripture”, quoting the FTL Cochabamba Declaration at length (italics original). Miguez Bonino then turned to Padilla specifically, highlighting his Lausanne 1974 paper. Here, he noted Padilla’s rejection of “‘acculturation’ to the cultural norms of the missionary sending nations” and the “American way of life.” Miguez Bonino also highlighted Padilla’s book The Gospel Today (1975), which formed much of Padilla’s later work Misión Integral (1986) (Mission Between the Times).

In a 2013 interview, Samuel Escobar gave credit to Orlando Costas and Miguez Bonino for pushing the boundaries of ecumenism in the Latin American

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74 Miguez Bonino, Faces of Latin American Protestantism, 48.

75 Ibid., 49.

76 Ibid.

77 Ibid., 49-50.
Theological Fraternity. Costas himself gave the credit to Míguez Bonino for influencing him in this realm. Míguez Bonino’s choice of the term ‘evangelical’ as a self-descriptor may have also been influenced by FTL member Costas. He critiqued an earlier article by Míguez Bonino, which sought to categorize Latin American religious subgroups. Here, Míguez Bonino identified the “charismatic,” “revolutionary” and “conservative” families. Costas wrote that Míguez Bonino had ignored the “Evangelistic or Kerygmatic family.” These he associated with proclamation. Costas also posited a fourth group, in which he placed the FTL—the “Didachê,” the Greek word meaning teaching. Thus, in a similar way to Padilla’s dialogue with Míguez Bonino on the kingdom of God, Costas pushed him to incorporate in his categorization a theological “family” that, in Costas’ opinion, took the church and the Bible seriously. Thus, at every turn the FTL encouraged Míguez Bonino in this direction—a label with which Míguez Bonino ultimately self-identified. Míguez Bonino was also invited by John Stott to give the London Lectures in Contemporary Christianity in 1974, presumably on Padilla’s recommendation. He gave a provocative lecture titled, “Christians and Marxists: The Mutual Challenge to Revolution.”

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80 Costas, Theology of the Crossroads, 265.

81 Ibid.

As Míguez Bonino increasingly identified with evangelical sectors of Latin America, Padilla increasingly identified himself as ecumenical. From the mid-1980s, Padilla began to see ecumenicity as an essential component of integral mission. In a recent interview, René Padilla seamlessly moved from discussing his friendship with Míguez Bonino to Padilla’s own appropriation of the terminological pairing “evangelical and ecumenical.” For Padilla, the two realities—a relationship and a self-identification—went hand-in-hand. Reflecting upon Míguez Bonino’s influence in 2013, Padilla said, “For me, he helped me a great deal. I appreciated his position a lot in reference to the unity of the church. Because he was very convinced that unity had to remain in concrete situations. More than talking about unity was to know people of different churches and to do things together to work together.” Similarly, Padilla spoke of the necessary connection between integral mission and ecumenicity: “If we talk about integral mission, we have to talk about this theme—the mission of the church that isn’t a separatist mission but a mission of reconciliation. Reconciliation with the other as a brother in Christ if he says he confesses Christ as Lord.” Padilla later concluded, “The unity of the body of Christ is extremely important for an integral testimony.”

6.7. Contested Friendship from Beginning to End

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84 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013.

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.
One of the defining moments of their friendship came in 1992 as Padilla concluded his role as executive secretary of the FTL at CLADE III. As had been his characteristic practice throughout the previous two decades, Padilla invited Míguez Bonino to play a prominent role in the conference. In his monumental work *Faces of Latin American Protestantism*, Míguez Bonino wrote, “[CLADE III] went beyond the limits of the Latin American Theologic Fraternity to become a truly ‘Latin American Protestant Congress,’ as much due to the breadth of its representation as to the wealth of materials and the freedom of debate. We were there present at a truly ‘ecumenical event…of Latin American Protestantism.’”\(^{87}\) The contrast between CLADE I and the Padilla-led CLADE III is striking. Padilla also asked Míguez Bonino to write a reflection on CLADE III for the FTL journal *Boletín Teológico*.\(^{88}\) The result was an article titled “CLADE III as ecumenical meeting.” After acknowledging Padilla’s role in the article, Míguez Bonino declared, “CLADE III would probably be marked in the history of Latin American evangélico churches as the start of a new era.”\(^{89}\) Perhaps most importantly, he gave credit to the inclusion of “the whole gospel”—though some disagreed within a robust debate. He wrote, “At the same time the experiences that are had at the local level will demonstrate that practice<<integrity (*integridad*) of the gospel>>--the whole gospel—that was so central in the work of CLADE III.”\(^{90}\) In a 2013 interview, Padilla also recalled Míguez Bonino speaking at CLADE III of the faithfulness of FTL to the church and

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\(^{89}\) Ibid.

\(^{90}\) Ibid., 163.
lamenting that ISAL had been part of division.⁹¹ In this way, Padilla’s legacy of integral mission was clearly shown in CLADE III, as well as in Míguez Bonino’s perception of and inclusion in the conference.

Not everyone approved of the ecumenicity of CLADE conferences. Míguez Bonino continued to face pressure to dissociate himself from Padilla and the FTL-sponsored CLADE. In a 2013 interview, Padilla retold a story that Míguez Bonino had shared regarding his flight to the next CLADE gathering—CLADE IV in Quito, Ecuador. In 2013, Padilla recounted this story, told by Míguez Bonino: Prior to boarding his flight to Quito, another Methodist leader saw Míguez Bonino in the airport and asked where he was flying. He replied he was flying to Quito. “What are you going to?” the ecumenical leader asked. Míguez Bonino responded, “I’m going to attend CLADE, the congress on Latin American evangelization.” To this the Methodist leader replied incredulously, “Why are you going there?” (The reader should note this is Padilla’s recollection of a story told by Míguez Bonino). Padilla commented, “José told me this because there was always prejudice like this.” Later, Padilla chuckled and said, “We were more ecumenical than the ecumenicals.”⁹²

6.8. Conclusion

This brief historiographical survey in chapters five and six only begins to describe the extensive collaboration between these two key leaders. One could expand on their partnership in the Buenos Aires Kairos Community. For example, Míguez Bonino often hosted missionaries in his home who were invited by Padilla.⁹³

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⁹¹ René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September 2013.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.
This chapter does not pretend to be exhaustive, yet various preliminary conclusions may be posited: First, as Míguez Bonino became increasingly disillusioned with ISAL and its radicalization, he turned publicly toward a private relationship that had been maturing for nearly two decades. As a self-described evangélico, Míguez Bonino was committed to the local church and its vibrancy in orthopraxis. Secondly, historians should avoid the interpretive jump from organizations to individual leaders, especially with regard to theological polarization. This proximity between Míguez Bonino and Padilla makes sense when considering Padilla’s roots in the global evangelical student movement. One of its characteristics, particularly within InterVarsity and IFES, was the sometimes discordant proximity between progressive and conservative leaders. For example, it is noteworthy that a conservative evangelical such as British IVF General Secretary Oliver Barclay participated in the same international evangelical body (IFES) as a progressive leader such as René Padilla. Within Latin America, this proximity was even closer. Thus, once again, the student movement provided both mentorship and tools that aided the development of integral mission.

Ultimately, narratives of polarization between evangelical and ecumenical Protestantism in the post-war period should be problematized. The relationship and collaboration between these two leaders demonstrates robust theological exchange and negotiation, despite organizational polarization. Padilla’s relationship with Míguez Bonino and ecumenical Protestantism in particular shaped Padilla’s understanding of ecumenicity and its relationship to integral mission. Padilla not only self-identified as ecumenical but also expanded the dimensions of integral mission to

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include ecumenicity. It appears, then, that Padilla and Miguez Bonino—seen internationally as symbolic representatives of ecumenical and evangelical Protestant traditions—formed their theology *en el camino*—a path they often shared.\(^95\)

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\(^95\) Mackay made the metaphorical distinction between theology from the balcony “el balcón” and that made on the path “el camino.” John Alexander Mackay, *Prefacio a la teología Cristiana* (México: Casa Unida de Publicaciones, 1984), 38. Originally published in 1945.
Section Three:

The Diffusion of *Misión Integral*
Chapter Seven: René Padilla’s Influence on the Global Evangelical Movement: The Rise of the ‘Other’ Evangelicalism

In June 1977, René Padilla, John Stott, Orlando Costas and José Míguez Bonino descended a winding road tucked into the side of Irazú volcano, an active volcano in Cordillera Central, Costa Rica, just outside the city of Cartago. One topic dominated the conversation during this journey: the efficacy of Marxism versus capitalism, and each one’s compatibility with the Christian faith. As they navigated this narrow road, the four theologians stopped to watch “two teams of peasants ploughing a hillside field, and sowing it with potatoes.” John Stott recorded in his travel diary soon after, “Two oxen were yoked to a simple wooden plough, while barefoot men walked up the furrows rhythmically scattering fertiliser and potatoes.”

This living parable offered a vivid backdrop to discussing the relationship between Christianity and politics, theology and economics, along with power, corruption and the future of Latin America. The conversation also provides us with a window into the new religious landscape of the post-war period—an increasingly diverse and increasingly global evangelicalism, represented by a Latin American Methodist liberation theologian in Míguez Bonino, an ecumenical evangelical in Costas, a British evangelical Anglican clergyman in Stott, and a progressive evangelical in Padilla. Perhaps nowhere symbolized the rise of the ‘other evangelicalism’ more than the Lausanne Congress of 1974.

René Padilla’s presence on the platform at the congress was simultaneously a symbol of emerging evangelical leadership from the Global South and a symbol of

protest. Padilla chose to address the audience in Spanish, though he was fluent in English and spoke English at home with his children. Padilla recalled in 2013 that this linguistic choice was meant to teach Western delegates the experience of listening to a translator, and to “protest the linguistic imperialism of English.”

The reason at the time may have been more innocuous: conference organizers asked him to use Spanish.

In many ways, the Lausanne Covenant was a brokered peace accord between increasingly polarized camps in particular, Western missionaries and agencies, and a new generation of evangelicals who were increasingly non-white and from the Global South.

Though this ‘other evangelicalism’ had already arisen, it remained widely unrecognized in the West. The next few decades would see massive shifts in both leadership and strategy for Protestant evangelical mission around the world. The proximity of conservative and progressive leaders within evangelical Protestant mission organizations set the stage for conflict and negotiation.

Within recent historiography, there has been an increased focus on the influence of progressive evangelicalism within the United States. This new historiography is largely the story of political defeat for progressive evangelical leaders at the hands of the American Religious Right. In contrast, the story of progressive evangelical Christian mission remains complex—a story of victory and

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2 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 11 September 2013. This conversation is indebted to Stanley, Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism, 22. Of Padilla’s address in Spanish, Stanley wrote, “One suspects a political point was being made.”

3 John Capon, ”Let the Earth Hear Whose Voice?,” Crusade 26(1974): 6. If this was the case, it is unclear why the organizers would have made such a request.

4 Stanley, Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism, 155.

defeat, resistance and appropriation on the global stage. These two movements—
progressive evangelical politics and Christian mission—found critical continuity
through the influence of leaders from the Global South. For example, Swartz has
argued, “It took the contributions of people from non-American contexts previously
on the margins of neo-evangelicalism to launch the movement [of progressive
evangelical politics in the USA].” Swartz has suggested more specifically that Latin
American Christians, among other “third-world evangelicals…shaped the course of
evangelical politicization.”6 The voices of ‘third-world evangelicals’ gained
prominence within global evangelical missions and within progressive student
missions organizations such as InterVarsity. While the story of progressive
evangelical politics is increasingly clear, this story of influence on traditional
Protestant evangelical mission remains opaque.

This chapter will provide an assessment of the nature of Padilla’s influence
upon the growing acceptance of integral mission within global evangelicalism. In
doing so, it will pay particular attention to his role in widening evangelical Protestant
discourse while influencing key evangelical leaders and organizations in the process.
It will examine Padilla’s influence within traditional Western missionary structures,
on personal friends such as John Stott (named as one of Time magazine’s 100 Most
Influential People in 2005), and upon wider organizational networks such as the
International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT), and the
Micah Network.7 The conclusions of this chapter will be necessarily preliminary due

6 Swartz, Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism, 113.

7 It is worth highlighting that Stott’s Time article was written by Billy Graham
himself. Billy Graham, “John Stott,” Time (18 April, 2005). See also Time Staff,
to the challenge of writing recent history. As events draw closer to the present day, documentation often becomes scarcer—due to personal letters and archival documents remaining with living, main characters, and the nature of 20th century technological changes away from letter writing and toward electronic communication. With that important caveat in mind, what follows is an exploration of Padilla’s influence upon the widespread acceptance of integral mission themes within global evangelicalism.

7.1. Lausanne and the Widening of Evangelical Discourse: Padilla and Radical Discipleship

Ruth Padilla DeBorst remembered her mother Catharine Feser Padilla gathering the children around a world atlas in their home in Buenos Aires in 1974:
“The tone of her voice had a certain unaccustomed urgency: ‘Today, when he gives his talk here, in Lausanne, Switzerland,’ and she pointed to the city on the map, ‘Papi will say some things that not everyone is going to want to hear. Let’s pray for him and for the people listening to him.’” Padilla and Feser Padilla had clearly discussed the reality and implications of his controversial words. Neither Padilla nor Escobar entered the Lausanne Congress with naïve optimism. Both had accepted their nominations in opposition to the advice of IFES general secretary C. Stacey Woods. At the congress, controversial plenary speeches by Samuel Escobar and René Padilla received mixed reviews from Western leaders. Time magazine highlighted Padilla among noteworthy ‘Third World Evangelicals’, as “one of the meeting’s most

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provocative speeches.” One observer, John Capon, editor of *Crusade* magazine, wrote that Padilla’s paper “really set the congress alight.” Using a similar metaphor, Chris Sugden wrote, “The blue touchpaper [sic] for evangelical social responsibility this century was lit at the Lausanne Congress in 1974 by two staff workers of the Inter-Varsity Fellowship in Latin America, Rene [sic] Padilla and Samuel Escobar. Their papers on evangelism triggered an explosion.”

In his plenary speech, Padilla questioned the exportation of “American culture Christianity”, calling instead for what he called *misión integral*—probably the first use of the phrase on a public stage. His paper received “the longest round of applause accorded to any speaker up till that time” at the Congress—signaling that Padilla’s tone found congruence with many voices in the audience. Padilla himself recalled seeing the body language of North American leaders as he gave his speech—arms crossed, frowned faces. “They felt attacked,” he said. This contrasted heavily with exuberant greetings from mostly “Third World” leaders after the speech. The controversy surrounding Padilla’s presentation represented wider growing pains for the global evangelical community that would play out over the next few decades. One thing was clear: the global reflex of traditional ‘mission fields’ was growing

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13 Capon, "Let the Earth Hear Whose Voice?," 6.

louder and harder to ignore. Padilla’s identification of the United States as the source of shallow Christianity in the Global South was controversial. Yet, the content of Padilla’s emerging integral mission was enough to create backlash within mainstream evangelical Protestant mission leadership.

    Samuel Escobar also braced himself for conflict with what he called “evangelical tycoons,” as he pondered accepting Billy Graham’s invitation to join the planning committee in 1972. \(^{15}\) This inclusion in the planning committee ironically blunted Escobar’s influence on later progressive evangelical development. In Escobar’s absence (due to involvement in running the Lausanne conference), Padilla took a major role in organizing the ad hoc radical discipleship gathering. This gathering, along with both his and Escobar’s controversial plenary speech, sent shockwaves through global evangelical conciliar discourse.

    On the third day of the 1974 Lausanne Congress, Padilla’s was the only plenary address of the day. After ascending the platform, Padilla declared, “I am going to put all the cards on the table with the prayer that God leads us during these days to a clearer understanding of all that he expects of us.” \(^{16}\) The speech set off, in Padilla’s words, “fiery debate.” \(^{17}\) *Time* magazine summarized Padilla’s plenary speech well:

    Some of the Third World Evangelicals at the congress—who made up a vocal half of the participants—added other critical views of some past Evangelical efforts. In one of the meeting's most provocative speeches, Rene Padilla [sic],

\(^{15}\) For the invitation, see BGCA, SC 111, Box 32, Folder 17, Graham to Escobar, 21 April, 1972.


\(^{17}\) Padilla, "Siervo de la Palabra," 117. This translation was chosen in part due to Padilla continuing the “fire” metaphor with regard to Escobar’s paper.
an Ecuadorian Baptist who works in Argentina, assailed the sort of easy Christianity that the U.S. has often exported. "A Gospel that leaves untouched our life in the world ... is not the Christian Gospel but culture Christianity, adjusted to the mood of the day," Padilla warned. "This kind of Gospel has no teeth. It demands nothing." Accordingly, Padilla cautioned Evangelicals to resist the temptation of trying to make the maximum number of converts. Though conversions are wanted, "faithfulness to the Gospel should never be sacrificed for the sake of quantity."18

Padilla later recalled that his and Escobar’s speeches were “forged in the heat of Latin American student work”—a point which was emphasized in chapter three.19

Padilla’s plenary speech had focused on the perceived dichotomy between social action and evangelism in Christian mission. He said:

Concer for man’s reconciliation with God cannot be separated from concern for social justice…the mission of the church is indivisible from its life. I refuse, therefore, to drive a wedge between a primary task, namely the proclamation of the Gospel, and a secondary (at best) or even optional (at worst) task of the church…love to God is inseparable from love to men; because faith without works is dead; because hope includes the restoration of all things to the Kingdom of God.20

Padilla’s words were in clear contrast to the emphasis of Graham’s opening speech. Graham had declared, “Here at Lausanne, let’s make sure that Evangelization is the one task which we are unitedly determined to do.”21 Padilla expanded his thoughts further, “A comprehensive mission corresponds to a comprehensive view of salvation. Salvation is wholeness. Salvation is total humanization. Salvation is eternal life—the life of the kingdom of God—life that begins here and now…and touches all aspects of

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18 *Time*, "A Challenge from Evangelicals."


20 Ibid.

man’s being.”22 Since Padilla delivered this speech in Spanish—what he actually said was not “comprehensive mission” but “misión integral.” This wider understanding of the content of the gospel would prove the most controversial aspect of both Padilla’s plenary speech and his rousing presentation at the later Radical Discipleship gathering (which I will describe below).23 After his speech, Padilla recalled:

The people from the majority world, almost all, were enthusiastic. I had some others who came up enraged. They (the enthusiastic ones) felt represented by what I was saying. Not all, but many, many. In contrast, especially those from the United States, some wouldn’t even greet me—the reaction like this (frown face, crossed arms). Stone faced. They felt attacked.24

Padilla perceived the response from Majority World delegates as overwhelmingly positive—fueling his part in organizing the later radical discipleship gathering.

On Sunday, 21 July 1974, nearly 500 participants (almost one-fifth of delegates) gathered to discuss topics broached in the plenary speeches by especially Padilla and Escobar under the title “radical discipleship” (Padilla thought more would have attended if they had more time to plan).25 Thus, he, alongside John Howard Yoder, spearheaded the radical discipleship group (along with others such as Athol Gill from Australia). Contrary to Salinas’ assertion, Samuel Escobar was not directly involved in the planning of the radical discipleship group.26 Escobar was preoccupied

22 Ibid., 130.


26 Salinas, The Golden Decade, 137.
with planning committee meetings. Furthermore, Padilla’s influence here was more central than current historiography has implied. In this, the influence of Latin American evangelicals was clear from the outset. In the radical discipleship gathering, three of the four speakers were members of the Latin American Theological Fraternity—Padilla, Escobar and Yoder, who was the only American member (chapter 7 has already shown that Padilla was the primary mind behind the FTL). Escobar was also invited to give an opening speech. Padilla certainly did not introduce the concepts, but his speech broached the topics and provided space for the discussion.

After an opening song on the acoustic guitar, an unidentified moderator began the proceedings by saying, “We’re here, as you know, to get down to some ‘tin tacks’ about the question of radical discipleship, which as you appreciate, is the best way we can sum up the problem of really coming to grips with the social structures of our society, and how we as Christians should be relating to them.”

The radical discipleship gathering took a decidedly leftist political turn as Padilla made seemingly off-the-cuff comments in his speech. Padilla certainly confirmed the fears of Western leaders by doubting the need for American-style democracy and placing hope in a military regime in Peru:

And let me tell you this: you may know of a social ferment in Latin America. I believe that as a matter of fact, we are not all that certain that Latin America can find a way of democracy. Not sure the American model of democracy is the one we want anyhow! (audible mumbling in the crowd). What I mean is this: there is evidence, very clear evidence, that most of the Latin American countries are moving toward a totalitarian government, a military government,

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29 BGCA, SC 53, T180.
and that the pity of it all is the choice is between a rightist military government and a Marxist government. I may be oversimplifying, there may be another choice, I haven’t seen much of a hope except perhaps for a model which is being produced in Peru which is a military government and yet a government that is really trying to make basic changes in the structures of society. Some of us still look to that experiment with a bit of hope.

Given the purposes of Lausanne planners, the explicit anti-communism of evangelical leaders such as Graham and Campus Crusade for Christ president Bill Bright, and the broad fears of communism within American evangelicalism, Padilla’s remarks were certainly controversial. Yet, anyone paying attention to Padilla’s writings would not have been surprised by this. Indeed, a few months earlier Padilla had implicated the US State Department in the violent overthrow of Chilean President Salvador Allende in the magazine *Christianity Today*. Padilla had already registered on the radar of conservative evangelicals—as seen earlier, Padilla was perceived as anti-American as early as 1966. Stacey Woods wrote to the general director of LAM Horace L. Fenton Jr. “I’m glad René Padilla was with you, and I do hope that he did not prove himself to be anti U.S. I know there are overtones of that, but I believe with care and prayer this can be overcome with all our Latin American leaders.” While Fenton reported back to Woods that he did not observe anti-American sentiments in Padilla, Padilla felt the need to write to Charles Troutman of LAM to defend himself. All of this makes it all the more surprising that John Stott (and with Billy Graham) was able to hold the fragile coalition together.

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32 BGCA, SC 236, Box 11, Folder 8, Fenton to Woods, 1 February, 1966. BGCA, CN 236, Box 11, Folder 8, Padilla to Troutman, 12 October, 1966.

In his radical discipleship speech, Padilla followed this political statement with his understanding of the gospel: “You see, I have come to see, that as a matter of fact, Jesus Christ came not just to save my soul, but to form a new society and that that society takes shape first of all in the church. This is the new society… Can we really really really [sic] say that the church today reflects the fullness of the gospel?”

The questions from the audience honed in on this central aspect of what would later be termed integral mission: the inclusion of ethics in the gospel message itself. These came specifically from delegates John Chapman and Paul Burnett. Burnett accused Padilla of conflating the evangel with ethics, which he saw as clearly distinct in the New Testament. Here, Padilla appeared to equivocate, allowing for an intellectual distinction between the two, but not a practical one. Questions had to be cut off so that Escobar and Yoder could also speak. More than anything here, Padilla had proved his ideas demanded response from the evangelical community—ideas that found both acceptance and rejection in the following decades.

Escobar followed Padilla’s speech and took a decidedly irenic tone. Escobar argued for the necessity of ethics in partnership with preaching the gospel. Escobar’s concern was “really evangelizing” in a biblical way. Thus, he concluded, if we are to “evangelize” effectively, we must live out the ethical “implications of following Christ.” This diplomatic, moderate tone perhaps cemented Escobar’s inclusion in the drafting committee of the Lausanne covenant, in contrast to Padilla’s exclusion. Careful attention to the audio recordings reveals that Escobar should not be viewed as a parallel or co-influence on the radical discipleship gatherings, as has

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34 BGCA, SC 53, T180.
35 BGCA, SC 53, T181.
36 Ibid.
been written elsewhere. Rather, Escobar was included by Padilla, and provided an irenic, cooperative tone to a decidedly combative gathering.

American Mennonite John Howard Yoder followed Escobar’s speech, and found critical continuity with Padilla’s understanding of ethics as part of the gospel message. Padilla’s influence on Yoder here is doubtful, however. On the contrary, Yoder had been writing on this issue for years, including a 1971 Spanish article for Certeza magazine where Yoder spoke of a wider gospel message. The Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition had long emphasized the ethical dimensions of discipleship. Yoder was part of a broader coalition of Anabaptist thinkers such as Art Gish (Church of the Brethren), Dale Brown (former moderator of the Church of the Brethren), Myron Augsburger (president of Eastern Mennonite College) and Ronald J. Sider (Brethren in Christ), who became increasingly prominent in the evangelical community in the 1960s and 1970s. In David Swartz’ incisive analysis, he wrote, “The evangelical left [in the United States] in fact featured a disproportionate number of Anabaptists”, pushing evangelicalism toward “prophetic social engagement.” Similarly, Mennonite presses such as Herald Press and Reformed presses such as Eerdmans were increasingly publishing on these topics. It remains unclear if Padilla

37 Swartz, Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism, 165


39 Swartz, Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism, 153. Swartz expanded “Ron Sider and his fellow Anabaptists helped a new evangelical left coalesce around issues of global justice and simple living”, p. 154. Sider’s book Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger (1977) was distributed widely in evangelical circles, including conservative organizations such as Campus Crusade for Christ and more progressive ones such as Padilla’s IFES.

40 See for example the emphasis on simple lifestyle in Doris Janzen Longacre, More-With-Less Cookbook (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1976). For more on this
was directly influenced by this increasing Anabaptist Mennonite literature and influence. In his own recollection of Lausanne, Padilla either consciously ignored or was surprisingly ignorant of Anabaptist emphases such as “simple lifestyle” when he implied his plenary paper provoked evangelicals to pick up the issue. Padilla may well have been practising simple lifestyle prior to coming in contact with Anabaptists such as Yoder, but the term’s later capital within evangelical communities should be credited to this earlier Anabaptist heritage. The very name radical discipleship speaks to Yoder’s influence in channeling this Anabaptist emphasis.

Given the overwhelming support of the delegates present, Padilla certainly left the meeting feeling optimistic. After the congress, he recalled the radical discipleship document as “the strongest statement on the basis for wholistic mission ever formulated by an evangelical conference up to that date. Social involvement had finally been granted full citizenship in evangelical missiology, mainly under the


41 Padilla, "My Theological Pilgrimage," 105-106. Swartz makes a convincing case for the Anabaptist roots of this later evangelical emphasis. See Swartz, Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism, 164-165.

influence of people from the Two-Thirds World."\textsuperscript{43} He also declared the death of the dichotomy between social action and evangelism in Christian mission.\textsuperscript{44}

The actual document argued that the content of the gospel was wider than conservative emphases, including “Good News of liberation, of restoration, of wholeness, and of salvation that is personal, social, global and cosmic.”\textsuperscript{45} Padilla himself was unequivocal decades later with regard to the inclusion of social elements: “The input from Latin America, the radical discipleship document, formal and informal discussions on the social dimension of the Christian mission during the congress, and John Stott's role as chairman of the drafting committee resulted in the inclusion of various important topics related to Christian social responsibility, radical discipleship, and church renewal and unity in the Lausanne Covenant.”\textsuperscript{46}

Padilla’s leadership in the Radical Discipleship gathering, certainly as the most important Third World evangelical, if not the most important source of impetus, reveals a few conclusions. The first is that the broad welcome given to radical discipleship themes and their inclusion in the Lausanne published documents reveals a groundswell of support that was gathering among evangelical leaders in the Global Swartz, Moral Minority: The Evangelical Left in an Age of Conservatism, 164-165.


\textsuperscript{45} C. René Padilla, "Evangelismo y la responsabilidad social: De Wheaton '66 a Wheaton '83," Misión (1985). For Padilla’s discussion of this, see Douglas, Let the Earth Hear his Voice: International Congress on World Evangelization, Lausanne, Switzerland, Official Reference Volume, Papers, and Responses, 1294.

South—beyond the purview of many Western leaders. Padilla’s plenary speech, and his leadership in the Radical Discipleship Group, broached topics that had previously been marginalized, and provided space for other progressive evangelicals to speak. Certainly, a swell of progressive evangelical action aided Padilla’s influence—including the 1973 Chicago Thanksgiving Workshop on Evangelicals and Social Action. Yet, Lausanne gathered evangelicals from across the political spectrum, expanding the reach of progressive evangelical themes. This creation of space also provided significant avenues for more diplomatic leaders such as Samuel Escobar to exert influence in a more irenic way. This space for progressive evangelical themes was contested at every turn—especially within the interpretation of the Lausanne Covenant itself. Here, Padilla’s significance can be seen through his intimate relationship with John Stott.

7.2. Padilla’s Influence on John Stott: New Channels for Integral Mission

John Stott and René Padilla first met in July 1959 at Tyndale House in Cambridge. Padilla, who was finishing his final year at Wheaton College, was in Europe to attend the 1959 Paris IFES general committee along with Escobar, Wayne Bragg (who was then an IFES staff worker in Puerto Rico), and Stacey Woods. As was mentioned in the introduction, Padilla met Stott again four years later in London, as Padilla began his PhD work at Manchester University. Padilla remembered, “He

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47 See Swartz, *Moral Minority*, pp. 4-6, 24, 133-135, 178-84, and 192-202 for extensive discussion on this workshop and its significance.

48 René Padilla, interview by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013. See also chapter one, p. 26-27.

called me by name. I was astounded. He was one of the best people with names."\(^{50}\)

This interaction sheds light on one of Stott’s most enduring legacies: his interest in Majority World leaders. Stott and the Padilla remained close throughout the next three decades, their last meeting being 2008 at Stott’s retirement home at St. Barnabas College in Lingfield, Surrey.\(^{51}\) Padilla dedicated *Mission Between the Times* to Stott in the front matter along with Padilla’s wife Catharine and Stott’s Langham Monographs republished the 2010 version.

Influence within these relationships was multidirectional—Stott on emerging evangelical leaders, and the latter on Stott. In chapter one, Stott’s address at the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin 1966 showed his belief in the primacy of evangelism in Christian mission.\(^{52}\) However, in his 1975 work *Christian Mission in the Modern World*, Stott admitted he would “express himself differently.”\(^{53}\) The Great Commission *did* include social responsibility, he argued: “I now see more clearly that not only the consequences of the commission but the actual commission itself must be understood to include social as well as evangelistic responsibility, unless we are to be guilty of distorting the words of Jesus.”\(^{54}\) In that period of less than a decade, Stott experienced a conversion to social responsibility in the mission of

\(^{50}\) René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013. This is expanded from the discussion in the introduction, page 26.

\(^{51}\) Padilla, "From Lausanne I to Lausanne III," 25.

\(^{52}\) See p. 24-25.


\(^{54}\) Ibid. For more on Stott’s conversion to social dimensions of the gospel, see Alister Chapman, *Godly Ambition: John Stott and the Evangelical Movement.* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 113-132.
the church. What were the primary influences on Stott in this shift toward holistic mission?

In January 1974—six months prior to the Lausanne Congress—Stott and Padilla traveled throughout Latin America, preaching and lecturing together under the stated title “Towards Holistic Christianity.” Stott’s trip with Padilla and the FTL included a visit to “hardline communist” political prisoners in southern Chile, who had been “interrogated under torture” by the military regimes.55 During this trip, Stott wrote, “[Padilla’s] stature impresses me increasingly.” A week after this diary entry, Stott preached on “the revolution of Jesus, changing persons as well as structures” in a southern Chilean prison. Afterward, “a mass of [imprisoned] students thronged” to Stott and Padilla.56

After this experience in Latin America, Stott began to think increasingly about the implications of the Third World context for Christian mission. In Padilla’s words, he “began to think that word and action are inseparable.”57 A year after the 1974 world congress, Stott published a book that revealed that he had changed his mind on the place of social action in Christian mission.58 As the Protestant evangelical world continued to shift toward more holistic emphases, Stott’s name continued to emblazon the front pages—including the edited documents of International Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility, held at Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 19-25, 1982. Because of his influence on editing the documents,

55 Lambeth Palace Library, John Stott Papers, John Stott Travel Diary, “Southern Chile January 24-31 1974.”

56 Ibid.

57 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September 2013.

Stott has been widely credited with communicating this through a famous metaphor—social action and evangelism working in tandem like two wings of a bird. This metaphor first appeared in English through the International Consultation on the Relationship between Evangelism and Social Responsibility held in 1982 in Grand Rapids. This document declared, “[Social action and evangelism] are like the two blades of a pair of scissors or the two wings of a bird… kerygma (proclamation) and diakonia (service) went hand in hand [in Jesus’ ministry].”\(^{59}\) Once again, this groundbreaking declaration was influenced significantly by René Padilla. Indeed, the language and metaphors here exactly reflected his wording in his 1970 article “Teología Latinoamericana: ¿Izquierdista o Evangélica?”, which has been discussed earlier in this thesis.\(^{60}\) Careful attention to this Spanish article reveals Padilla not only used this metaphor in 1970, but also the Greek words kerygma and diakonia in his explanation, leaving little doubt of the origins of Stott’s idea. It is not surprising then that in a 2013 interview Padilla acknowledged his own influence on Stott’s shift toward holistic themes.\(^{61}\) Escobar later expanded at the 2010 Lausanne Congress in Capetown:

In 1974, in January, John Stott traveled all over Latin America… In his presentations in several Latin American countries, organized by the Latin American Theological Fraternity, John Stott and Latin Americans discussed some of the issues that later on were going to come in the covenant. *John said that this trip to Latin America had helped him to change some of his views in light of the*

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\(^{59}\) Ibid.


\(^{61}\) René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September 2013.
way in which the church was reading the Scripture in Latin America” (italics mine).\textsuperscript{62}

Rather than simply “Latin Americans,” the influence from the South can be further specified. Escobar was living in Canada during Stott’s lectures in the early 1970s, and did not travel with Stott or attend any of Stott’s lectures. Careful attention to Stott’s itinerary reveals that Padilla rarely left Stott’s side in their lectures throughout Latin America—from Mexico City, to Lima, to Santiago and Southern Chile, and Buenos Aires.\textsuperscript{63} Indeed, Padilla was Stott’s translator for every lecture and often gave his own lectures alongside him. They also spent the holidays together, mostly staying in the same hotel room. This influence from Latin America, then, rather than simply emanating from Latin America in general, was primarily from Padilla himself.

To be sure, Stott’s shift on Christian mission was influenced by events and ideas as diverse as his global networks—including the National Evangelical Anglican Congress at Keele in 1967, which he chaired.\textsuperscript{64} It is also worth noting TEAR Fund was founded in 1968 out of momentum from Keele. Padilla would later become International President of TEAR Fund UK and Ireland.\textsuperscript{65}

Stott’s full embrace of holistic mission in 1974-5 should be seen in light of movements within evangelical Anglicanism and the wider evangelical world at Lausanne. However, it is plausible to suggest that the primary influence was Stott’s


\textsuperscript{63} Lambeth Palace Library, John Stott Papers, John Stott Travel Diary.


friendship with leaders from the Third World. Stott’s 2011 obituary in the New York Times called him “one of the world’s most influential figures in the spread of evangelical Christianity over the past half-century.” If Stott was key in the distribution of evangelical Christianity, Padilla was key in what language was used in spreading the message. This friendship would also have manifest implications for the interpretation of the Lausanne covenant itself.

7.3. Widening Christian Mission: Padilla’s Influence on the Interpretation of Lausanne

At Lausanne 1974, Billy Graham spoke of his hope for resolution within the evangelical community on the relationship between social action and evangelism. In the aftermath, it became clear that Lausanne’s answer to the social action question depended on the interpretation of the documents themselves. Graham hoped for a narrower definition of the mission of the church, one that maintained the evangelical distinctive of the primacy of evangelism. It is worth noting here that this does not mean Graham was anti-social action, but simply that he opposed any reorientation of mission priorities away from evangelism. Instead, Stott, along with Padilla and other especially young evangelicals, pushed for a wider definition. The actual Lausanne covenant was an intricate balance struck by Stott, Graham, and those on the drafting committee. Stott worried about losing the next generation of evangelical leaders—who were increasingly diverse and often located outside of the Western world. In the same way, he worried about losing the powerful conservative bloc. Padilla’s

66 Graham, "Why Lausanne?,” 34. Cf. on the perfect balance, see Steuernagel, "The Theology of Missions in its Relation to Social Responsibility within the Lausanne Movement," 156.

interpretation of the Lausanne documents in a FTL Spanish article in 1975 left no doubt of his reading: “In notorious fashion, in the first place, the Covenant eliminates the dichotomy between evangelization and social responsibility.”\(^{68}\) Fellow-plenary speaker Escobar also echoed this sentiment.\(^{69}\) In general, Padilla’s 1975 article revealed significant optimism regarding the prospects of holistic evangelical mission. Padilla’s optimism would soon turn to stark realism.

Initial reports on the congress also lent themselves to a holistic interpretation. Carl F. H. Henry, widely seen as the architect of post-war evangelicalism in America, signaled an openness to social aspects within the gospel message\(^ {70}\) Padilla quoted Henry with approval in “El Pacto de Lausana.” Various negative responses to the Lausanne Covenant from conservative missiologists also seemed to suggest that the congress marked a victory for the holistic bloc.\(^ {71}\) Yet, other conservatives argued that Lausanne defined mission within a narrower definition.\(^ {72}\) Jack Dain wrote to

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\(^{68}\) Padilla, "El pacto de Lausana," 5.

\(^{69}\) Escobar, "A Movement Divided: Three Approaches to World Evangelisation Stand in Tension with One Another," 8.


Charles Troutman in August 1974 that most had warmly received the presentations of Escobar and Padilla, but that opposition came from two quarters:

They were both very warmly received by the vast majority of those present but I think they were misunderstood by two sections most of whom came from North America. First their emphasis was quite wrongly interpreted as a social gospel in spite of this position being totally repudiated. Secondly they were both regarded as being anti American. Unfortunately quite a number of Latins repudiated their stand on matters of culture.73

Leaders from the United States and conservative evangelicals from Latin America were the main opposition to the presentations and holistic emphases. Interestingly, Dain’s letter also provided a window into Billy Graham’s perspective. Dain wrote, “I think a small number of Americans were genuinely puzzled, others were angry but many, including Billy himself, accepted what was said and realised that it had to be said.”74

The opposing definitions and interpretations of the Lausanne Covenant came to a head at the Lausanne Continuation Committee meeting held in Mexico City on 20-24 January 1975. Though Padilla was not included in the discussion, his presence was felt through his influence on John Stott.

The goal of the Mexico City meeting was to resolve the issues regarding the interpretation of the Lausanne documents, and specifically the relationship between social action and evangelism. The nature of the committee foreshadowed conflict, as many “Third World members” encountered issues with visas and general travel. As a result, many arrived late or not at all. In Stott’s diary, he wrote, “The planning committee had originally decided to appoint a Continuation Committee of only 25 people, but the Americans had insisted that they must have 10 members (I think in

73 BGCA, SC 111, Folder 10, 26 August, 1974 Dain to Troutman.

74 Ibid.
order to be representative and so the non-American members had to be correspondingly increased). In the end this size of the committee grew to 45, and there were 13 Americans present. This was too large a dominant national group.” (Parentheses original). Stott then concluded, “This imbalance was surely a major cause of the troubles we were soon to experience.”

Graham started the gathering by sharing his conviction regarding evangelism as the primary task of the church. Stott’s travel diary records his initial thoughts:

Having described the two [views on Christian mission], Billy made it clear that he favoured the first [evangelism as primary]. If we accepted the second, he added, ‘we’d get off the mandate given us at Lausanne’, as Lausanne had given us in his judgment ‘a rather narrow mandate’. So we must ‘not get bogged down in other peripheral matters’. This troubled me very much, and I stayed up several hours thinking about it and preparing a rebuttal.

Stott was determined to shape the outcome of the gathering. Stott’s notes confirm Alister Chapman’s analysis: “Stott was especially keen to speak out on this point in the absence of friends like Padilla and Escobar, who might forget about Lausanne if evangelism were the only focus.” When the committee appeared to be leaning toward endorsing evangelism as primary, Stott threatened to resign. To Stott’s surprise, he was immediately joined by Jack Dain, who echoed this sentiment. Stott recorded, “To my surprise Jack Dain from the chair immediately supported me, saying he too would resign, since he couldn’t possibly return to Australia with the narrow concept, for Australian participants were already implementing the broader

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75 Lambeth Palace Library, John Stott Papers, John Stott Travel Diary, Mexico, 9-14 January, 1974.

76 For more on Graham’s view of social transformation as an implication of evangelism, see his speech at the Berlin Congress of 1966. C. Peter Wagner, "Lausanne twelve months later," Christianity Today 19, no. 20 (1975): 963.

77 Chapman, Godly Ambition: John Stott and the Evangelical Movement, 143.
vision.” As a result, Stott and Peter Wagner (who had spoken for the narrower vision) withdrew to discuss a compromise. Their decision was to allow each region to decide specifically what they meant by the Lausanne covenant—which, in Stott’s words, “is probably the healthiest and most practical solution.” The minutes from the Mexico City meeting reveal an attempt to please both sides—with perhaps a nod to the conservative reading. It read, “The Continuation Committee understands as the Covenant indicates that ‘the furtherance of the church’s mission means the encouragement of all God’s people to go out into the world as Christ was sent into the world, to give themselves for others in a spirit of sacrificial service, and that in this mission evangelism is primary.” It also went on to emphasize reaching “unreached peoples.”

To the very end of this consultation, Stott channeled the influence of Padilla and other ‘Third World’ delegates. According to Stott’s account, many delegates at the Mexico City gathering wanted Graham to be the head of the Lausanne organization at the conclusion of the gathering. Once again, Stott spoke against this: “Fearing that the Third World delegates would be both too polite and too loyal to Billy to oppose this, I felt I had to.” According to Stott’s diary account soon after, he was widely panned by American critics, who believed him to be embroiled in a power struggle with Graham. Yet, Graham defused the tension by speaking of Stott’s loyalty to him in his closing devotional. Stott recalled, “It was a marvellously gracious speech, and sensitive to the situation; it defused the atmosphere and healed

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78 Lambeth Palace Library, John Stott Papers, John Stott Travel Diary, Mexico, 9-14 January, 1974.

79 BGCA, SC 46, Box 21, Folder 2, “Minutes of the Continuation Committee,” 20-13 January, 1975. For more on this, see Chester, Awakening to a World of Need: The Recovery of Evangelical Social Concern, 85; Stanley, Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism, 173.
the wounds.” Stott privately regretted his own quickness to take the mantle of defending Lausanne, and “acting as protagonist for the Third World” but was glad of the outcome. Others were more pessimistic. Leighton Ford observed that “‘The Spirit of Lausanne’ had quickly dissolved.” Perhaps in reflection of the continued disagreement, Peter Wagner signaled victory for the traditional camp, while Johnston lamented the accommodation of social action. In a personal letter to Jack Dain, Samuel Escobar decried a perceived effort by Christianity Today (seen through Wagner’s article above) to “change the meaning and the direction of Lausanne.” Escobar argued, “They won’t be able to do it, because in the memory of people and in the way in which it impressed them, I am sure that a good thing of Lausanne was that it was not an American jamboree but rather a world forum of evangelicals.” However, the next Lausanne Congress in Pattaya, Thailand, would indeed suggest the conservative bloc had the upper hand.

Within the Lausanne Movement, there continues to be debate with regard to the interpretation of the original covenant. Indeed, consensus remains widely elusive. The Lausanne Covenant was as much a political settlement as a theological one—making space for progressive and conservative strands of an increasingly polarized

80 Lambeth Palace Library, John Stott Papers, John Stott Travel Diary, Mexico, 9-14 January, 1974. Stott and Graham remained close until Stott’s death in 2011. Graham released a statement after Stott’s death saying, “The evangelical world has lost one of its greatest spokesmen…and I have lost one of my close personal friends and advisers. I look forward to seeing him again when I go to heaven.” Wolfgang Saxon, "Rev. John Stott, Major Evangelical Figure, Dies at 90," New York Times, 28 July, 2011.

81 Steuernagel, "The Theology of Missions in its Relation to Social Responsibility within the Lausanne Movement," 174-175.


83 BGCA, SC 46, Folder 5, Box 30, Escobar to Dain, 29 July, 1975.
movement. Seen in this light, the theological stalemate continues within Lausanne because there never was a theological consensus to begin with.\textsuperscript{84} To be sure, Padilla’s influence on Stott here did more to avoid a conservative interpretation spreading, than it did to settle the argument once and for all.

\subsection*{7.5. After Lausanne: Negotiating New Evangelical Theologies}

The mutual influence between Stott and Padilla continued well after the Lausanne Congress of 1974. Stott not only channeled Padilla’s influence at the Mexico City gathering, but also pushed Padilla to participate in consultations that were largely spurred by his plenary speech. The Lausanne Theology Working Group, created at Lausanne and led by Stott, organized four consultations which reflected themes raised in Padilla’s plenary speech. These, in turn, largely set the trajectory for the later Lausanne Movement: 1. The social content of the gospel message. 2. A clarion call for Third World leadership. 3. The relationship between the gospel and culture, including the need for a simple lifestyle 4. His pointed critique of Church Growth Theory and its Homogeneous Unit Principle.\textsuperscript{85} These four reached their climax in a 1983 in Wheaton, Illinois, entitled ‘Consultation on the Church in Response to Human Need’. The themes raised by Padilla at Lausanne continued to surface throughout the 1970s and early 1980s. The first was Padilla’s vocal rejection of the Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP). The HUP was articulated by Fuller Theological Seminary Professor Donald McGavran. In it, McGavran argued that individuals tend to prefer converting to Christianity without crossing boundaries of

\textsuperscript{84} I am indebted to a conversation with David Westlake of TearFund for this insight.

\textsuperscript{85} These four are similar to those raised by Padilla in Padilla, "Siervo de la Palabra," 118. Cf. C. René Padilla, "From Lausanne I to Lausanne III," in Mission Between the Times (Langham Monographs: Carlisle, 2010), 7.
Churches that only target one racial group are more ‘successful’ in mission because they are the ones that grow numerically. Thus, church mission strategy should be carried out with a goal toward homogeneous churches that have inter-congregational interactions. Padilla rejected HUP not only for promoting what he saw as racial segregation, but also because of its implications for Third World leadership. If technology and numerical planning were the impetus for mission, then the center of missiological decision-making would be squarely in the ‘West.’ To Padilla, “No amount of exegetical maneuvering” could allow this strategy in the light of biblical mandates on unity.

Padilla’s plenary speech was not the first time he had excoriated the HUP. In 1971, Padilla’s response to Wagner’s *Latin American Theology* had been strongly critical of McGavran and HUP. In response, McGavran wrote Padilla a private letter, hoping to sort out their differences in person. Padilla later called this an attempt to silence him, and appears to have ignored the gesture. Elsewhere, Stacey

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91 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September, 2013. McGavran also wrote to Paul Little, asking him to forward one of his articles to Padilla, “The Theological Meaning of the Growing Interest in Church Growth in Asia”, and to ask him to stop his criticism. Little did send on the article,
Woods supported Escobar’s critique of McGavran saying, “I am very thankful that you are sensitive to the scurge [sic] of McGavran’s Armenian [sic] thinking.”

Instead of writing McGavran or meeting with him privately, Padilla took his grievances to the world stage of Lausanne 1974, and continued to publish on the issue up until and after the HUP consultation. Padilla’s clash with Fuller Seminary professors at Lausanne and later in Pasadena was representative of broader growing pains for the increasingly diverse global evangelical community.

John Stott invited René Padilla to participate in the Consultation on Homogeneous Units and Church Growth at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, May 30-June 2, 1977. Padilla declined Stott’s invitation, saying the topic did not interest him. Stott, however, was determined to include Padilla in worldwide consultations. Stott had previously agreed to visit Latin America in 1976-1977 under the auspices of the FTL. When Padilla declined Stott’s invitation to the HUP consultation, however, Stott reneged on his commitment to visit Latin America.

According to Padilla’s 2013 recollection, Stott responded, “If you don’t accept this invitation [to the HUP consultation], I’m not coming to Latin America.” To this

but without McGavran’s suggested comment. See SC 426, Box 1, Folder E, McGavran to Little, 22 August, 1974.


“threat”, Padilla recalled responding, “This is extortion!” (Padilla repeated this response in 2013 with a laugh). In response, Padilla acquiesced and attended the meeting. When asked in 2013 about the consultation, he shook his head and recalled it as “terrible, terrible.” He added, “It wasn’t a dialogue. They didn’t listen. At all, at all.” Padilla continued, “They had made up their mind so they weren’t ready to talk about any of it, at all—at all. No dialogue.”

Stott’s travel diary confirms Padilla’s recollection. Stott wrote:

I was surprised how threatened the SWM [School of World Mission] team obviously felt and, in consequence, how defensive they were in their presentations and contributions. I did not feel they were really ‘open’ and it saddened me that when René Padilla got up to speak, they (quite unconsciously, no doubt) put down their pads and pens, folded their arms, sat back and appeared to pull down the shutter of their minds.

Padilla’s paper at the HUP consultation was titled “The Unity of the Church and the Homogeneous Unit Principle”, which later largely comprised a chapter in his work Mission Between the Times. Padilla’s persistent criticism of the HUP produced mixed results. Many Majority World thinkers have joined in this criticism, while the HUP continues to hold credence in many circles through its corollary “unreached people groups” designation. Padilla continued to negotiate within the Lausanne movement during consultations in the late 1970s and 1980s.

The Consultation on Gospel and Culture was convened in Willowbank, Bermuda, in January 1978 as a follow-up discussion to Lausanne. In the foreword,

94 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 10 September 2013. The present researcher asked, “Tell me about your relationship with John Stott.”

95 Lambeth Palace Library, John Stott Papers, John Stott Travel Diary, Stott 6/1/15 “Travel Diaries 1977.” 156 ff.

John Stott and Robert Coote specifically single out Padilla’s paper as the reason for the gathering: “At Lausanne René Padilla startled his listeners by describing some missionaries as exporters of a ‘cultural Christianity’ rather than an authentic gospel. Paragraph 10 of the Lausanne Covenant is entitled ‘Evangelism and Culture.’ No responsible messenger of the Gospel can ignore the subject any longer.” Padilla presented a paper entitled “Hermeneutics and Culture: A Theological Perspective” and used his platform to advocate further contextual theology. Padilla concluded, “The urgent need everywhere is for a new reading of the Gospel from within each particular historical situation.” Padilla brought wider attention to the issue of cultural influence on the gospel message. Tim Chester is a good example of pushing Padilla’s influence too far. He wrote, “Ever since René Padilla’s attack on ‘culture Christianity’, the role of culture in our understanding of the gospel and of mission has been a theme parallel to that of social action.” Of course, theologians such as Richard Niebuhr had been speaking of culture and Christianity for many years within mainline Protestantism. Similarly, evangelical anthropologists such as Alan Tippett and Darrell Whiteman had consistently urged the priority of addressing cultural themes. Yet, Padilla’s public focus on the issue helped shift the issue from the

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97 Robert T. Coote and John R. W. Stott, *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture: The Papers of the Lausanne Consultation on Gospel and Culture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), vii. The foreword also interestingly notes, “Our Consultation [sic] was not lacking in cultural drama…Africans and Asians had to complain of Euro-American dominance, while an uninhibited Latin American brother protested in uninhibited Latin American style against the oppressive behavior of the Anglo-Saxon moderator who sought to impose on the proceedings a Westminster parliamentary model, and who now penitently confesses the error of his ways!” See ibid., ix.

98 Ibid., 78.


margins of global evangelicalism to center stage. This influence further expanded at
beginning of the 1980s with a consultation in London.

The Consultation on Simple Lifestyle was convened in London on March
1980. This was most explicitly connected to the ‘radical discipleship’ gathering at
Lausanne. At the London consultation, Padilla presented a paper titled “New
Testament Perspective on Simple Lifestyle.”101 According to missiologist David
Bosch, this consultation “moved beyond the themes and scope which characterized
evangelical meetings in the 1960s and 1970s, not least because of the strong Third-
World representation” (italics mine).102 Holistic themes within evangelical mission
thinking were continuing to gather momentum in various circles. J. A. Scherer wrote,
“The London consultation went far beyond simple living…and touched precisely on
God’s preferential option for the poor, divine judgment on oppressors, the pattern of
Christ’s own identification with the poor, the risk of suffering for Christ’s sake, and
Christian support for changes in the political structures—themes seldom articulated
with such passion in evangelical mission circles.”103 While Scherer noted these were
seldom-broached topics, most of them explicitly appeared in Padilla’s work. In this
way, Padilla helped widen evangelical discourse and the acceptability of social issues
that were previously marginal or taboo.

Another arena in which Padilla’s significance played a role was in the 1970s
and early 1980s was the Consultation on the Relation between Evangelism and Social
Responsibility, which was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan, in June 1982. Padilla’s

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101 See Ronald J. Sider, ed. Lifestyle in the Eighties: An Evangelical

102 Bosch, Transforming Mission, 407.

103 J. A. Scherer, Gospel, Church, and Kingdom: Comparative Studies in
Cited in Bosch, Transforming Mission, 407.
paper was entitled “The Church in Light of the Kingdom of God” and was a response to Arthur P. Johnston’s paper on “The Kingdom in Relation to the Church and the World.” Eventually, these four consultations led to a June 1983 World Evangelical Fellowship (WEF) consultation in Wheaton titled “The Church in Response to Human Need”—perhaps the climax to this trend of integral mission thought. The Wheaton document clarified, “The mission of the church includes both the proclamation of the gospel and its demonstration. We must therefore evangelize, respond to immediate human needs, and press for social transformation.” Of this declaration, David Bosch wrote, “For the first time in an official statement emanating from an international evangelical symposium, the perennial dichotomy [of the two mandates between evangelism and social action] was overcome.” For the first time, the core of integral mission had been inked in an official declaration. Padilla and many progressive evangelicals have widely championed these developments that took place in global consultations. Yet, these declarations and developments were contested at every step of the way.

After the Lausanne congress, Padilla was increasingly prominent and controversial in evangelical circles on both sides of the Atlantic. Within his own organization of IFES, Padilla faced opposition from North American and British leaders. For example, IVF general secretary Oliver Barclay took issue with the heart of Padilla’s Lausanne presentation—“the wider dimensions of the gospel.” On 25 September 1974, a few months after the congress, Oliver Barclay wrote to René

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104 See Bruce J. Nichols, ed. In Word and Deed: Evangelism and Social Responsibility (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 1985). Only parts of Padilla’s paper were included. See pp. 133-134.

105 Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, ed. The Church in Response to Human Need (Grand Rapids; Oxford: Eerdmans; Regnum, 1987), 260.

106 Bosch, Transforming Mission, 407.
Padilla warning him of reaction to his paper in the “media” (most likely American accounts) and attempting to rein in the young leader.\textsuperscript{107} Padilla had written in his paper:

> The lack of appreciation of the wider dimensions of the Gospel leads inevitably to a misunderstanding of the mission of the church. The result is an evangelism that regards the individual as a self-contained unit—a Robinson Crusoe to whom God’s call is addressed as on an island—whose salvation takes place exclusively in terms of a relationship to God. It is not seen that the individual does not exist in isolation, and consequently that it is not possible to speak of a salvation with no reference to the world of which he is a part.\textsuperscript{108}

At Lausanne, Padilla connected the mission of the church to the content of the gospel message itself—content that contained social realities. In doing so, he challenged the prevailing theology of mainstream Protestant evangelicalism that social action was an \textit{implication} of the gospel message—not inherent to it. Evangelicals such as Carl Henry could write about evangelical social action with verve and spirited opposition to issues like racism and economic inequality.\textsuperscript{109} Indeed, this was a rallying cry for the neo-evangelical resurgence in the United States.\textsuperscript{110} Yet, calling social ethics part of the gospel message itself smacked of the social gospel and theological liberalism that was fresh in the evangelical psyche. As British Anglican theologian and founding member of the FTL Andrew Kirk recalled in a 2014 interview, “Lausanne maybe went beyond what a lot evangelicals at the time would have wanted in that direction [of social justice]. And the terrible sort of fear of the social gospel and


\textsuperscript{109} Henry, \textit{The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism}.

watering down the focus on evangelism.”

Thus, in his personal letter Oliver Barclay warned Padilla, “You must be pretty careful how you express yourself” after rumors swirled regarding Padilla as theologically liberal. Barclay thought Padilla’s position was being misrepresented in what he read. Ironically, what Barclay saw as misrepresentation was Padilla’s actual position. Barclay wrote, “Social good works are, on this understanding, part of the good news of salvation and not a consequence of the good news of salvation. I know we are arguing about the meaning of the words Gospel and salvation, but are you sure that you are really Biblical in using it this way?”

Barclay knew that Padilla was pushing the boundaries of where evangelical Protestantism had defined “biblical” views of the gospel message. “I confess to being a little worried”, Barclay concluded. Barclay’s rebuke, however, like other pushback from the Lausanne congress, only fueled Padilla in his exploration of Latin American social theology.

7.6. Disillusionment with Lausanne and the Rise of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians (INFEMIT)

Padilla and Majority World mission thinkers did not simply work toward reforming global evangelicalism from within traditional structures—they also sought to build their own structures. As the decade of the 1970s wore on, it appeared increasingly clear that progressive evangelical influence within traditional missionary structures—especially represented by Lausanne—had been blunted. This frustration reached a tipping point in June of 1980 at the Lausanne gathering in Pattaya, Thailand. Early on, a group of Majority World delegates drafted a “Statement of

111 Andrew Kirk, Skype interview by author, 1 December, 2014.

Concern for the Future of the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization” with a list of demands for the Lausanne organization leaders. These included calling for new leadership, a “World Congress on Evangelical Social Responsibility and its implications for evangelism,” and, perhaps most controversially, guidelines on how “Evangelicals who support oppression and discrimination…can be reached by the Gospel and challenged to repent.” According to Orlando Costas, nearly one third of delegates signed the document within a few hours. The official committee response was viewed by Costas as “cool and disappointing” and “unsatisfactory.” In a 2013 interview, Ruth Padilla DeBorst spoke of two strands of the Lausanne movement working in tandem up until that point. Padilla DeBorst recalled:

Lausanne from its very beginning, for me, has just been somewhat schizophrenic…there are at least two significant strands within Lausanne. One that is much more pragmatic, strategist, managerial mission. And another one that is in my estimation deeper theologically, and I would also say more humble and more holistic. And those two strands—they were evident in 74—and there’s been this pendulum swing between those strands ever since.

During the nine years between the Pataya (1980) and Manila (1989) congresses, the conservative bloc rallied and continued to dominate global evangelical conciliar gatherings. Padilla DeBorst recalled, “Manila was just the triumph of the managerial perspective—the unreached peoples, church growth, and all of that. And the other strand was hardly [evident].” Thus, René Padilla and many Southern evangelicals felt the movement was drifting from the holistic gains made at Lausanne 1974. Their

113 For Padilla’s agreement, see Padilla, "From Lausanne I to Lausanne III," 8.


116 Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Skype interview by author, 4 December, 2014.
fears were confirmed by the Pattaya Declaration of 1980 which clarified, “Nothing contained in the Lausanne Covenant is beyond our concern, so long as it is clearly related to world evangelization” (italics mine).117 Padilla later wrote, “Quite clearly, the Pattaya Consultation on World Evangelization failed to cope with the debatable issue of the relationship between evangelism and social responsibility. The tension already present in the Lausanne Covenant between…evangelism and socio-political involvement…and that ‘in the church’s mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary’ (paragraph 6) remained unresolved.”118 This perceived conservative advance spurred Padilla and other Majority World leaders to form their own organization for the promotion of holistic mission thinking.

It is worth noting here that in American evangelical circles, evangelization is a synonym for evangelism, whereas in Roman Catholic circles it is a synonym for the whole process of mission. The New Evangelization has been one example of this. For example, Pope John Paul II wrote in Redemptoris Missio, “A new evangelization ought to create among the wealthy a realization that the time has arrived for them to become true brothers and sisters of the poor through the conversion of all to an ‘integral development’ open to the Absolute.”119 He also quoted the 1979 the Conference of Latin American Bishops at Puebla, which stated, "The best service we can offer to our brother is evangelization, which helps him to live and act as a son of


God, sets him free from injustices and assists his overall development.” Though Lausanne was officially entitled the International Congress for World Evangelization, evangelization in this context meant verbal proclamation—thus the need for further linguistic development of the term integral mission.

Indian evangelical leader Vinay Samuel described in a 2014 interview the continued frustration of many Majority World Lausanne delegates with the Western mission establishment and the impetus for forming a new organization in the 1980s. Samuel recalled:

The larger greater motivation was that the mission establishment was definitely controlled by North America and supported by certain Western elements, like the UK and Australia. And Germany very differently. And there was a space for nonwestern thinking which was willing to and wanting to critique Western understandings of mission. The space was only available in the mission of the West. They controlled the spaces, they invited you, controlled publications—therefore if you wanted space internationally or globally and you wanted space to critique and innovate and to think through where God was leading you, you had to do it in the space of the people who were suspicious of you and you had to mind yourself. But we were the ones dealing with poverty on the front lines. We need to engage it and critique and find new ways of dealing with it. At that point we needed to create our own space (italics mine).121

That space for exploring mission theology out of the Majority World came to be known as the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians or INFEMIT. Twenty-five theologians gathered for the first INFEMIT consultation in March 1982, in Bangkok, Thailand.122 The Kenyan Anglican bishop David Gitari reflected in the official conference volume, “This was a historic meeting. It was the first time that theologians of evangelical conviction from the Two Thirds World had

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120 Documents of the Third General Conference of Latin American Bishops, Puebla (1979), 3760 (1145). Quoted by Pope John Paul II in Redemptoris Missio.

121 Vinay Samuel, phone interview by author, 13 May, 2014.

122 Bosch, Transforming Mission, 405-406.
met at their own initiative.”

Padilla was elected Chairman, David Gitari as Vice-Chairman, Vinay Samuel Executive Director, and David Bussau of Australia as Treasurer. Samuel described INFEMIT as the brainchild of three “fraternities”: The Latin American Theological Fraternity, Partnership in Mission Asia (PIM-Asia) and the African Theological Fellowship (ATF). In reality, the ATF was founded at the second INFEMIT gathering in 1984 in Tlayacapan, Mexico. Today, it describes itself as linking “members across the continent in a network of spiritual encouragement, theological reflection, Christian social action and service, and engagement with the religious, social and cultural forces shaping African societies.”

Other significant early participants included Kwame Bediako of Ghana, Miroslav and Judith Volf from Croatia, and Canadian Jonathan Bonk. Bediako was intimately aware of the theological developments coming from Latin America. For example, Bediako and Padilla were delegates together at the Ninth General Committee of IFES held at Schloss Mittersill Castle in Austria from 20 August-1 September 1975. The minutes record Bediako responding to Padilla’s presentation on “indigenous” leadership and theology. It recorded, “Dr. Kwame

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124 Ibid., preface.


Bediako (Ghana) stated that he was encouraged to note that the Latin Americans were developing indigenous forms of training and teaching.”

INFEMIT, in turn, founded the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies in 1983, which enabled Third World leaders to complete post-graduate work from their own contexts. The four INFEMIT board members listed above also sat on the OCMS board. The first graduation of OCMS graduates took place during the fourth INFEMIT gathering in Osijek, Yugoslavia, in 1991. Padilla as chairman of the Board of Directors for OMSC conferred the first degrees at the ceremony. With Padilla at the helm as board chairman of both OCMS and INFEMIT, these two organizations also published the academic journal *Transformation* (which transferred from the WEF to INFEMIT/OCMS) from 1984 and a book publishing arm, Regnum Books, from 1987. Vinay Samuel recalled, “René was key to Regnum [being set up] because he was very keen that we would publish our own things.”

According to Samuel, the early gatherings of INFEMIT focused on the theme of integral mission. According to Samuel, the second motivation, behind frustration with Western missionary structures, was “the whole area of integral mission—not having to fight the battle of integral mission.” With the need for holistic mission accepted by everyone involved, the mission thinkers were then able to turn toward a practical outworking of holistic themes. As strongly as Latin American evangelicals

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127 BGCA, SC 49, I.F.E.S. Minutes, Gen. Com. II AB I + Executive Committee. Folder General Committee (9th) 8/20-9/1/75.

128 INFEMIT, "The Declaration of Osijek 'Freedom and Justice in Church State Relationships'," 6. For more on the OCMS, see INFEMIT, "News of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Mission Theologians."


130 Vinay Samuel, phone interview by author, 13 May, 2014.
like Costas and Padilla and African evangelicals sought the inclusion of Majority World leadership, according to Samuel, they also sought the exclusion of anyone from the West:

> It was a particular viewpoint of Latin Americans, both René and Orlando Costas and the Africans. They said we can’t have white scholars from the establishment while we are thinking through these things. I was never fully for it, but I accepted it.\textsuperscript{131}

While the first consultation took place in Asia, the second was hosted by the FTL in 1984 in Cuernavaca, Mexico. The third took place in Kabare, Kenya in 1987. Al Tizon has noted that after 1991, no international INFEMIT gathering took place—an indication of its waning strength.\textsuperscript{132} Recent developments however, seem to point to its resurgence, owing in part to new leadership—especially Ruth Padilla DeBorst as coordinator of the Networking Team of INFEMIT. In 2004, Padilla DeBorst met Kwame Bediako at a meeting of the board of the Overseas Mission Study Centre in New Haven, Connecticut. In a 2013 interview, Padilla DeBorst recalled a conversation with the late Bediako regarding INFEMIT. In her memory, Bediako said, “You know Ruth you really need to reactivate INFEMIT, we need it. We want it, we’re too isolated from each other. We all have connections to the North, but we don’t have enough connections South South. I’ll back you, I’m older, you can do this. And of course not long after that, he passed. But the seed had been sown.”\textsuperscript{133} In 2010, INFEMIT held their first “global summit” in nearly two decades, which included the original founders of INFEMIT and a new generation of Majority World theologians. At the gathering, and the 25\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of OCMS, Ruth described


\textsuperscript{132} Tizon, Transformation after Lausanne, 78.

\textsuperscript{133} Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Skype interview by author, 4 December, 2014.
herself “a daughter of INFEMIT.”

INFEMIT, more than anything, proved Majority World missiologists were willing and able to bypass traditional evangelical missionary structures to carry out their own projects. By the early 2000s, integral mission resurged within evangelical global mission structures—largely as a result of momentum within Christian mission and relief organizations. Latin America played a key role in this resurgence. As Padilla DeBorst opined,

> Latin America…the name, the experiences, and the intentionality was honed in Latin America but the spread also had to do with other faithful radical evangelicals in other contexts also grappling with the realities of their context and…INFEMIT gave them a space to find a common terminology. And to strengthen that vision for all of them. It also contributed to their appreciating each other, and encouraging to do theology within their own context not just regurgitating what was given to them from the North.

This “common terminology” was often that of integral mission.

### 7.7. Integral Mission Comes Full Circle: Integral Mission, the Micah Network and Cape Town 2010

The Lausanne Movement played one part in a broader reshaping of Protestant evangelical mission and relief. Fear of modernism, the social gospel, Barthianism, and the WCC gradually softened as prominent evangelical voices spoke to the need for a new approach to social action. For Christian mission and relief organizations, this meant they “could now appeal to the evangelical constituency as family, without the fear of either being rebuked for preaching the ‘social gospel’ or being charged of compromising on evangelism.”

Even those opposed to these holistic developments have acknowledged Padilla’s influence on widening evangelical discourse and

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135 Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Skype interview by author, 4 December, 2014.

acceptance of holistic themes. Though he intended it as a pejorative statement, Jim Harries has spoken of Padilla “legitimizing” holistic mission to create this new environment. One such example is the foundation of the Micah Network in 1999.

The Micah Network was formed in 1999 under the stated, unifying principle of integral mission. This marked the most prominent usage of the English phrase “integral mission” to date. As of 2014, the Micah Network comprised 578 member organizations in 86 countries. Notable member organizations in the United States include Compassion International, Christian Community Development Association (CCDA), Food for the Hungry, International Justice Mission, Latin American Mission, SIL International, Wheaton College Humanitarian Disaster Institute (HDI), the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA), and World Relief. Notable European member organizations include All Souls, Langham Place, International Aid Services, TearFund, Leprosy Mission International, and Wycliffe UK. Compassion International alone had an operating budget of nearly $645 million in 2012-2013, and was the 15th largest US charity in 2014. While the broader movement of progressive evangelicalism found varying degrees of failure and success, the formation of the Micah Network reveals progress for those espousing progressive concepts of mission. Its adoption of the English phrase “integral mission” can also be seen in wider dialogue. For example, the 1989 book Proclaiming Christ in Christ's Way: Studies in Integral Evangelism modified its title in its 2007 reprint to Studies in

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137 Jim Harries, "'Material Provision' or Preaching the Gospel: Reconsidering 'Holistic' (Integral) Mission," Evangelical Review of Theology 32, no. 3 (2008). In particular, Harries criticizes an unintended consequence of integral mission—a system where those with material resources can do mission, while those without them are destined to be receptors of it.

Integral Mission. The usage has not been confined to the Western world. The phrase is increasingly becoming a catchall term for holistic mission in the evangelical Protestant community.

In a 2014 interview, David Westlake, Director of Integral Mission at TearFund, spoke of the environment for Christian mission and relief organizations in the mid-1990s: "There was a sense among lots of Christians doing mission that we needed to ‘up our game’ theologically and in terms of identity." According to Westlake, Steve Bradberry, who at the time was leading TearAustralia, contacted René Padilla and began spearheading the organizational planning for what would become the Micah Network.

The Micah Network held its first consultation in Oxford in September 2001. The consultation was divided into five days, each with its own theme. The first day’s program simply read “INTEGRAL MISSION”, underscored by a plenary address from René Padilla titled “Integral Mission – Past and Present.” In his address, Padilla said, “That we should be able to raise these and similar questions at the very first international Consultation of the Micah Network throws into relief the changes

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that have taken place in the last few decades among a significant number of evangelicals around the world with regard to their understanding of the mission of the Church” (capitalization original). Padilla also spoke of the shift in attitude toward holistic mission, saying many who originally opposed it now agreed. Padilla then gave his well-worn account of how integral mission arose, focusing on major conferences and declarations. Padilla’s paper moved within grooves that his speeches often followed—including diversions into the political realm. Once again, Padilla demonstrated that he was beholden to no one, and never prone to diplomatic appeasement. Padilla concluded his paper by aiming at one of his most prominent targets: American foreign policy. Speaking of the September 11th terrorist attacks, Padilla said, “What I am saying is that there should be no surprise if a country that sows violence for the sake of economic profit reaps violence.” Though Padilla condemned the use of terror, his suggestion that the USA invited terrorist attacks was an unfortunate addendum to a speech focused on Christian mission. In the end, Padilla called for an entire disruption of the economic order: “The idolatrous shape of the contemporary economic system suggests that the time has come for evangelical service agencies in general and for the Micah Network in particular to give priority to educating Christians in the West to fulfill their prophetic task—to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with their God.” Not everyone was happy with the Micah Network adopting integral mission as a unifying phrase, however. Chris Sugden saw the increasing popularity of integral mission as an attempt by Christian

144 Ibid, 18.
145 Ibid.
mission and relief organizations to avoid the more political and ecumenical concept of “mission as transformation.”

Vinay Samuel described the method as focused on “enterprise solutions to poverty,” while Padilla “made a career attacking [Vinay’s] American business friends.” Whatever the reason for the increasing popularity of integral mission, its emergence was clear. The Micah Network has become a crucial network in organizing Christian mission and relief organizations under the banner of integral mission. This organization also expanded the reach of these ideas, further widening the discourse of evangelical social action and evangelism. This discourse came full circle in 2010 at the third Lausanne congress on world evangelization in Cape Town.

For the first time, integral mission was included in the official documents of the Lausanne movement. In doing so, “the Cape Town Commitment” quoted the “Micah Declaration on Integral Mission.” It read:

> The Bible declares God’s redemptive purpose for creation itself. Integral mission means discerning, proclaiming, and living out the biblical truth that the gospel is God’s good news, through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, for individual persons, and for society, and for creation. All three are broken and suffering because of sin; all three are included in the redeeming love and mission of God; all three must be part of the comprehensive mission of God’s people. Christian unity is the creation of God, based on our reconciliation with God and with one another.

The Cape Town Commitment’s adoption of the language of integral mission, and its quotation of the Micah Network is an interesting development in the state of evangelical discourse on mission and relief. René Padilla’s significance is certainly one part of this growing emergence of holistic themes.

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146 Chris Sugden, phone interview by author, 13 May, 2014.

147 Vinay Samuel, phone interview by author, 13 May, 2014.

148 The Cape Town Commitment, Part I. 10b.
At the 2010 Cape Town Congress, two days were dedicated to each section of the main theme: The Whole Church, the Whole Gospel, the Whole World. Padilla and Escobar were given the third plenary session, where they shared their understanding of the history of the Lausanne movement and their concerns with its future. Padilla’s concerns at Cape Town were threefold. The first was unsurprising: the concern for discipleship rather than conversion—teaching believers to obey everything Jesus commanded, he said. The second, however, reflected later Padilla emphases: globalization. “Globalization—globalization of what? Globalization of an unjust economic system that is destroying humankind. It’s affecting people all over the world but especially the poor all over the world. “ 3. “The whole question of the destruction of the ecosystem.”

It is also worth noting here that Padilla’s call to evangelicals had little to do with traditional mission emphases in the evangelical community. He had undoubtedly moved away from evangelism, to the point of increasingly excluding any discussion of its importance. For Padilla, economic and political concerns had superseded the evangelical distinctive of a need for personal regeneration and saving lost individuals. While Padilla certainly still held these views personally, he increasingly focused on other themes.

This presentation at Cape Town 2010 almost did not happen. Padilla initially rejected the invitation to Cape Town 2010. He was frustrated over a perceived attempt to silence him regarding his opposition to the Iraq War. At the 2004 Lausanne Continuing Committee meeting in South Korea, Padilla circulated an FTL-sponsored letter condemning the Iraq war. He was the first to sign it. In his

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recollection, the document soon “disappeared” after gaining various signatures. The Lausanne leadership also denied his request to read the letter publicly. In Padilla’s 2013 account, he received a letter from President Emeritus of Food for the Hungry and Japanese Lausanne leader Ted Yamamori rescinding Padilla’s role on the continuing committee, wanting someone “younger” (again, in Padilla’s words). Padilla connected this letter to his vocal opposition to American foreign policy. Thus, he said, “That was almost my last experience [with the Lausanne Movement].”

Yet, Ruth Padilla DeBorst sent her father a letter, urging him to reconsider. In Padilla’s recollection, she gave him three reasons he should reconsider, at his request: 1. He would be a speaker. 2. He could represent the history of integral mission within the Lausanne Movement. 3. He was a symbol of theology in the Majority World.

Padilla DeBorst recalled in a 2014 interview, “The reason I insisted that my dad do it was…I felt in a way this is an opportunity to affirm, build on, expand, deepen the wholistic legacy strand within Lausanne. So if we don’t attend, we’re basically giving up on it. It’s still a significant global church forum. If we’ve been given a voice, let’s speak!” Padilla DeBorst herself participated due to the leadership of Chris Wright, whom she said represented the legacy of John Stott and the more holistic perspective. With Wright at the helm of the theological working group, Padilla DeBorst wanted to participate. Padilla finally accepted because of these reasons, alongside intervention from American Doug Birdsall, who at the time was Executive Chairman of Lausanne.

This account of Cape Town 2010 reveals that Padilla remained a staunch idealist throughout his life and career. The Lausanne Movement was by far his

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150 René Padilla, interview and translated by author, Buenos Aires, 13 September 2013, pg. 36 field notes.
biggest platform for spreading integral mission, yet he was willing to walk away simply to oppose what he saw as abusive American foreign policy. Padilla was less concerned with his legacy or diplomatic relations, than with the power of ideas. This was perhaps his greatest strength, and perhaps a significant weakness.

7.8. Conclusion

The late mission thinker David Bosch wrote optimistically in the early 1990s regarding a shift toward holistic mission within Protestant evangelicalism: “In many respects, then, an important segment of evangelicalism appears poised to reverse the ‘Great Reversal’ and embody anew a full-orbed gospel of the irrupting reign of God not only in individual lives, but also in society.”

The central phrase in this optimistic quotation, however, is “an important segment of evangelicalism” rather than the entire global evangelical movement. The reality of polarization continues, especially with regard to the role of social action within Christian mission. Padilla has sounded optimistic tones in discussing the present climate for integral mission as well. In the second edition of Mission Between the Times, Padilla wrote, “At least in the Majority World today, there is increasingly less discussion on whether there are cultural, social, and even political tasks that the church is called upon to fulfill as an essential aspect of her mission. The question now is how to go about fulfilling those tasks…” Padilla also declared (speaking of the Micah Network), “The dawn of the day of integral mission has arrived!” Integral mission themes have certainly gained prominence in conciliar evangelical discourse, and within Christian mission and relief organizations especially. Its traction on the ground among average evangelical

151 Bosch, Transforming Mission, 408.

152 Padilla, Mission Between the Times, 3.

153 Ibid.
churches remains mixed. Traction has been gained in unlikely places, as well. New studies in Pentecostalism have noted the emergence of evangelism and social action in tandem. In *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* the authors explore what they call “Progressive Pentecostalism”, which they admit is simply a reworking of the phrase “integral gospel.” These trends are not confined to conservative evangelical circles. The reality remains, however, that the vast majority of Latin American churches would not agree with the framework of integral mission. In the recent PEW research project “Religion in Latin America”, Protestants in Latin America generally answered that what the poor needed more than anything else was to be evangelized. It is also worth noting that more Protestants say they personally engage in charitable works, though this was not the primary mission of their church. This fits well with the widespread evangelical belief of the primacy of evangelism and individual acts of service. The rise of integral mission, then, is both clear and complex. However, in due course, greater chronological distance from the subject matter will certainly shed further light on the story of integral mission in the twentieth century.

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Chapter Eight: Conclusion

8.1. Toward an Understanding of the Origins of Integral Mission

This thesis has attempted to shed light on the diverse networks of post-war evangelicalism and their role in shifting the movement toward national leadership and holistic emphases. More specifically, it has attempted to clarify the origins, development, and diffusion of integral mission. This study has mainly focused upon the dynamic interplay between Ecuadorian evangelical René Padilla and these diverse networks of global evangelicalism. By relying on the personal papers of many of the main players, bilingual interviews, census data, and archival documents this thesis has attempted to tell the story of how integral mission has become a defining concept for many Protestant evangelicals. René Padilla’s search for a postcolonial, contextual evangelical theology began within a context of growing unrest both sociopolitically and intellectually.

In the 1960s, a shift from theories of development to theories of dependency was the background for the emergence of Catholic theologies of liberation, perhaps best-known in the career of Peruvian Dominican priest Gustavo Gutiérrez, and his 1971 book *Teología de la Liberación*. This conversation was not simply a Catholic monologue, however, but crossed denominational boundaries, developing transnationally through conversations with European political theologians and North American Protestants in the World Council of Churches. Padilla’s shift from the conservative evangelical emphases of his day, which were clearly present in his writing prior to the mid-1960s, took place within a wider intellectual context that was increasingly being *conscientized* to its dependence on the North—both economically
and theologically. This maturation had manifest implications for how Padilla related to the powerful interests in North America, in particular. For example, when Padilla was asked to respond to liberation theology in *Christianity Today*, he used the opportunity to remind North Americans of their own political ideologies and cultural dependence.\(^{156}\) Rather than responding to the emergence of theologies of liberation, Padilla appears to have been primarily responding to a shared set of social and political forces that were reshaping post-war Latin America: rural-urban migration flows, the resulting complications of urbanization, and the rapid expansion of the universities, where Marxist ideas of revolutionary change presented a growing appeal to students. This resulted in new approaches to Christian mission and theologies when coupled with an intellectual context that was increasingly embracing theories of dependency. The origins of *misión integral* were found within an intellectual environment that increasingly rejected Western attempts to define Latin American thinking and practice. Padilla’s theology expanded and solidified as he trained at the centers of an emerging conservative evangelical biblical scholarship. This not only shaped Padilla’s theology but gave him the confidence to challenge the power players of global evangelicalism.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Padilla, like others, spoke of the theological poverty of Latin America; they complained that local questions were being met with foreign answers. Yet, as the story of *misión integral* has been told by the main players, one triumphalistic narrative has given way to another—a North American story of soul saving has been replaced by a postcolonial story of the emergence of truly independent Latin American contextual theology. By paying careful attention to archival documents, and interrogating this oral history, a revised understanding has

\(^{156}\) See especially p. 76.
arisen—one that sheds light on the sources of funding, foreign theological boundary-making, and continued intervention from missionary leaders well into the 1970s. Thus, while it is true that Padilla set the trajectory for the new contextual brand of evangelical theologies—its emergence was contested and negotiated much later than has been earlier told. Latin American Protestant evangelicals shared a post-war intellectual context with liberation theologians, yet negotiated a unique path of paternalism with North American evangelicalism. This intersection of imported theological and political influence from the North and a growing awareness of dependence in the South shifted global evangelicalism to new theologies that were contextual and holistic.

8.2. Toward an Understanding of the Development of Integral Mission

The development of integral mission followed a trajectory that was both clear and complex. Padilla’s response was not purely Latin American nor driven by exclusively Latin American concerns. Padilla’s theology developed within a multidirectional and international conversation that included a wide variety of interlocutors. Padilla became a metaphorical sponge—appropriating new theological perspectives from his undergraduate and graduate studies at Wheaton College in Illinois, his doctoral work in New Testament at the University of Manchester, from the Presbyterian missionary-statesman, John A. Mackay, and from his closest colleague and wife Catharine Feser Padilla. These multidirectional conversations built upon Padilla’s reading of the Latin American context, providing an approach to mission that was both evangelical and contextual. This thesis has paid careful attention to the sources of Padilla’s theology and has also clarified his role within the Latin American Theological Fraternity. For example, by positing the first sustained study of Padilla’s PhD thesis, the present work has provided further understanding of
the most important theological motif in the FTL: the kingdom of God. Padilla’s
discovery of the theology of the Kingdom in the work of George Eldon Ladd had
manifest implications for the development of contextual evangelical theology in Latin
America. Escobar’s recollection that Padilla shared this discovery with him and
organized the Reino de Dios FTL forum is revealing.157 This also clarifies Padilla’s
role in forming and shaping the FTL. Not only did Padilla coin the term misión
integral, but he set the agenda for the earliest and most influential meetings. Yet,
Padilla was not primarily a theologian, nor was he a New Testament scholar. The
vast majority of his career was spent as a student staff worker in evangelical
parachurch missions. This made his PhD studies at the University of Manchester
even more significant, as he would draw upon this time of study and reading for the
rest of his career. Many of the ideas with which he has been credited—especially the
kingdom of God as a theological motif—were neither his own creation nor a unique
personal recovery. He was simply one of many Protestant evangelicals who
rediscovered the kingdom of God in the 1960s.158 All of this careful attention to the
sources of Padilla’s theology has also clarified his role in contrast to that of his
colleague Samuel Escobar. While Escobar was largely self-taught theologically,
Padilla drew deeply from his studies at global evangelical centers of education in the
North. This generation of evangelical theologians were influenced by the
sociopolitical context of Latin America, while using tools provided by a
multidirectional educational conversation. In sum, rather than being either a
hegemonic North American story or a triumphalistic narrative of southern-hemisphere

157 See chapter five, p. 180. Samuel Escobar, e-mail message to author,
translated by author, 20 December, 2013.

158 See chapter four, p. 113.
independence, the conversation surrounding the development of integral mission was polycentric and multidirectional in nature.

In the 1960s and early 1970s, Protestants in Latin America were still a very small religious minority. This meant ecumenism between Protestant communities was more a necessity than a luxury for progressive evangelical thinkers like Padilla. Thus, as Padilla defended colleagues José Míguez Bonino and Justo González in the late 1960s, he was defending some of the few Protestant intellectuals who shared his convictions, along with the space for misión integral. These interlocutors were also much more diverse than current historiography has supposed. While perceived as irreconcilably polarized, organizations such as the WCC, ISAL, and the FTL all displayed a surprising ecumenical breadth at their origins. At the organizational level, the WCC and BGEA, for example, were clearly polarized against one another. But when these fault lines were applied to the Latin American context, they blurred. Further research on hidden or silenced narratives may produce salient historiography on Latin American Christianity and the proximity of Roman Catholic and evangelical Protestant communities. In doing so, the reconciliation that Latin American Catholics and Protestants desperately need may be closer than it appears.

8.3. Toward an Understanding of the Diffusion of Integral Mission

René Padilla’s role as a bridge between a younger, emerging evangelical leadership in the Global South and the evangelical establishment was crucial to the task of widening evangelical discourse. In fact, it is fair to say that one cannot understand the contextual turn of global evangelicalism in the post-war period without understanding Padilla’s role in it. Padilla certainly was not alone in stimulating a wider emphasis on holistic themes within global evangelical Protestantism. For example, the increasing influence of Mennonite Anabaptist
thinkers such as Ron Sider and John Howard Yoder and the evangelical elder statesman John Stott was crucial to this global dialogue on progressive themes.\textsuperscript{159} These evangelical networks, which were solidified at Lausanne 1974, proved crucial in this widening of discourse. Once again, the Latin American context was significant here. By paying careful attention to personal correspondence from the first CLADE gathering, this thesis has highlighted the importance of Charles Troutman’s attendance. Troutman later wrote of the impact of CLADE on his thinking, and warned Jack Dain not to repeat the mistakes of the American-exported CLADE I at the Lausanne Congress of 1974.\textsuperscript{160} This experience and later advice led Troutman and Dain to invite Padilla on to the platform of Lausanne 1974—an invitation that had manifest implications for the emergence of integral mission. Padilla then became a trailblazer, playing the role of controversial truth-teller and prophet, bringing to bear the reality of the Majority World into the consciousness of powerbrokers in the North. Evangelicals in the North could ignore the voices of their brothers and sisters in the South at their own risk, for the tides of change were sweeping over global evangelicalism, and reshaping the ways in which many thought about what it meant to be a faithful Christian in contexts of injustice, oppression, and inequality.

\section*{8.4. Padilla’s Significance within Global Evangelicalism}

The heart of this thesis’ significance perhaps lies at where the Lausanne Movement began and where it arrived in 2010. Beginning the story at Lausanne

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\item \textsuperscript{160} See chapter five, pp. 156-157.
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1974 is too late, for Padilla’s significance was already present in the Lausanne Covenant. Instead, comparing the statements from Berlin 1966 with that of Cape Town 2010 reveals an enormous development and contrast. Berlin 1966 clearly defined mission as evangelism, relegating social action to a secondary, muted status. Cape Town 2010, as was described in the previous chapter, included integral mission in its official statement. This reality leaves us with a crucial question: how does one explain the massive shift within evangelical mission that took place within a 50-year period? With this question in mind, this study has posited five ways in which René Padilla was significant within post-war global evangelicalism:

First, Padilla highlighted progressive theological issues that were previously relegated to the margins of global evangelicalism in the 1960s and 1970s. Though these ideas were present especially within contemporary Brethren-Anabaptist thought, Padilla consistently raised these themes at important global gatherings—often in controversial, anti-establishment ways. In doing so, he played a significant role in widening the parameters of evangelical discourse. Secondly, Padilla’s controversial style opened up avenues for more diplomatic Majority World leaders to exert increasing influence on the global evangelical community—particularly his colleague Samuel Escobar. Escobar’s ability to challenge evangelical mission and practice critically, while maintaining friendships and collegial relationships was partly due to Padilla’s heightened rhetoric, which one can see quite clearly in the contrasting styles of Padilla’s blistering critiques within *Mission Between the Times*, and Escobar’s decidedly irenic *The New Global Mission*.161 Escobar’s invitation to lead InterVarsity Christian Fellowship of Canada and his inclusion on the planning committee of Lausanne 1974 can be more clearly understood in light of Padilla’s

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increasingly controversial nature (especially seen in the personal correspondence of leaders from the North). Thirdly, Padilla and the Latin American context played an important role in John Stott’s public shift toward integral mission. Stott’s friendship with Padilla deepened during the critical chronological gap between Berlin 1966 (and Keele 1967) and the Lausanne Congress of 1974. Oral historical accounts, and Stott’s personal diary from his travels with Padilla speak to the impact of the Latin American context on Stott’s missiology. When Stott wrote his own understanding of these holistic themes, he borrowed from Padilla’s language and thinking—speaking strongly to Padilla’s significance here. This is not to say that Padilla was the primary influence on Stott’s theology or even his missiology. Stott was sensitive to contextual issues and distinctively connected to a younger generation of evangelical leaders from the Global South, including in Africa and Asia. Padilla was simply one influence, but a very significant one at a critical time in post-war global evangelical history and Stott’s theological revision. Fourthly, disillusionment with the Lausanne Movement solidified Padilla’s focus on Latin America as the center of his writing and ministry. He leveraged his time and energy into INFEMIT and the development of ‘south-south connections’. As his colleagues Orlando Costas and Samuel Escobar took up academic posts outside of Latin America in the North, Padilla remained in Argentina—though he was often offered similar roles. He focused instead on editing Certeza and Misión magazines and empowering a new generation to explore integral mission themes in their local church work and writing. As was clarified in chapter five, Padilla spent the majority of his career in Argentina, while Escobar and Costas did so in the East Coast of the United States. Padilla was thus significant in an emerging generation of Southern evangelical leaders who viewed the Christian gospel

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162 See especially p. 145.
as holistic. Fifthly, though significant attempts were made to blunt his influence, Padilla played a major role in setting the trajectory for the Lausanne Movement, which continues to serve as the broadest missiological think tank within the evangelical world. This also provides the clearest segue into understanding Padilla’s significance beyond Latin America. This thesis has attempted to understand to what extent Padilla can be appealed to as a source of influence within this global evangelical conciliar thinking. One aspect of his significance can be seen within the clear contrast between Berlin 1966 and Cape Town 2010. He was one of the most significant players that produced this shift in global evangelical conciliar thinking.

One further area of potential influence that has not been addressed for reasons of space and coherence is Padilla’s influence on at least some of the pioneers of post-evangelicalism in North America. Brian McLaren, who widely considered the most influential leader of the Emerging Church Movement, reflected on the influence of the Padilla family in a 2014 interview: “I would have to say, whatever small impact I’ve had in recent years, their flavor has seasoned everything I’ve done.”

McLaren also completed his influential 2006 book *Everything Must Change* after traveling and ministering with Padilla for five weeks, and staying at Padilla’s Kairos Center in Buenos Aires.

This revised understanding should shift the ways in which historians speak of some of the seminal moments in evangelical history of the second half of the twentieth century. When historians speak of the influence of the radical discipleship gathering at Lausanne 1974, for example, they should speak not only of emerging influence from the Global South or Latin America generally, but should isolate the specific contribution of Padilla through both his plenary speech and his leadership at

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the ad hoc gathering. These should be placed in conversation with the influence of John Howard Yoder, who clearly sounded similar calls for a holistic gospel. Protestant evangelicals within this global dialogue speak quite differently of mission from how they did even sixty years ago. Padilla and the Latin American context were a significant part of this linguistic shift.

Padilla and other Latin American evangelical leaders increasingly insisted on the non-interference of Western missionary leaders and the relentless priority of independence of theology for the Global South. This is simply one example of many where theologically conservative Latin Americans dictated the terms upon which this theological independence took place. As Latin American evangelical theologians shifted to new contextual and holistic themes, they pulled many global evangelicals with them. This study has also contributed to a wider understanding of the 35% of Latin American Protestants who do not identify as Pentecostal or charismatic. While certainly not a representative study, it provides nuance to the widespread assumption that theological conservatism always equals political conservatism. On the contrary, Padilla defined himself and his theology in opposition to North American fundamentalism and conservative evangelical political ideology—in particular, the loyalty of evangelicals in the United States to republicanism. René Padilla’s dynamic interplay between theologies of liberation, ecumenical Protestantism, and Western conservative evangelicalism also speaks clearly to Christians today in contexts of poverty, inequality, and injustice. The challenge for an evangelical like Padilla was to speak directly to his social location, while

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164 See the discussion on the audio tapes for example on pp. 238-244.

maintaining a balance between evangelism and social action. In reacting against the “soul saving” emphasis of his day, Padilla placed the accent on social action—often at the expense of evangelism.166 Regardless of the efficacy of integral mission, the question remains: how does the gospel speak to a world of violence, injustice, and inequality? As Christianity increasingly shifts southward, questions of the relationship between social action and evangelism will continue to challenge Christians everywhere. In this sense, the question is not if the gospel speaks to contexts of oppression and injustice, but how.

166 Andrew Kirk, Skype interview by author, 1 December 2014.
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