



**The Development Discourses of Irish Development Workers and  
Missionaries: Their Attitudes, Beliefs and Work Practices**

Thesis to be submitted for the degree  
of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
to  
Maynooth University

by

Fergal Rhatigan

2023

Department of Sociology

Supervisor: Professor Seán Ó Riain

Head of Department: Professor Mary Murphy

## Table of Contents

Summary.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	iii
List of Tables.....	iv
List of Abbreviations.....	v
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.1.a Disputing Development.....	4
1.1.b – Religion - From Colonialism to Development.....	9
1.1.c Understanding Development Practitioners.....	10
1.1.d Understanding Missionaries.....	13
1.2 Research Questions.....	14
1.3 The Structure of the Irish Development Field.....	16
1.3.a The State - Irish Government.....	17
1.3.b Irish Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).....	18
1.3.c Volunteer Organisations.....	19
1.3.d Missionaries & Missionary Organisations.....	23
1.4 Thesis Organisation.....	26
Chapter 2 Explanatory Frame for Understanding the Theory and Practices of Development.....	31
2.1 Introduction.....	31
2.2 Colonialism, Religion and Development: A Historical Overview.....	32
2.2a Macro Account of Colonisation and Development.....	32
2.2b Missionaries from Colonialism to ‘Development’.....	35
2.3 Discourses of Development and the History of the Idea of Development.....	37
2.3.1 Discourses of Development.....	38
2.3.2 History of the Idea of Development.....	39
2.3.3 Economic Development and Its Critics.....	41
2.3.4 Human Development and the Capabilities Approach.....	44
2.3.5 Religion and Development.....	48
2.3.5a A Brief History of Catholic Religious Social Teaching.....	51
2.3.5b Liberation Theology.....	53
2.3.6 Deconstructing Development.....	57
2.3.6a Post-Development.....	58
2.3.6b Gender and Development.....	59
2.3.6c Post-Colonialism.....	60

2.4	Making Sense of Diverse Development Discourses: Ingrid Robeyns' (2017) Modular View of the Capabilities Approach .....	64
2.4.1	Components and Measures of Human Development.....	64
2.4.2	Ingrid Robeyns (2017) Modular View of the Capabilities Approach.....	72
2.5	Development in Practice - The Beliefs, Roles and Work Practices of Development Workers and Missionaries .....	74
2.5.1	The Characterisations & Criticisms of the Development Worker .....	75
2.5.2	The Beliefs and Values of Development Workers.....	78
2.5.3	The Role of Development Workers .....	80
2.5.4	Beliefs, Values and Motivations of Missionaries .....	83
2.5.5	The Role of Missionaries .....	85
2.6	Development in Practice - The Role, Practices and Criticisms of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Faith-Based Organisations .....	89
2.6.1	The Role, Practices and Criticisms of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) .....	89
2.6.2	The Role, Practices and Criticisms of Faith-Based Organisations .....	91
2.7	Making Sense of Development Biographies and Discourses: Ethics, Situated Learning and Reflexivity.....	94
2.7.1	Ethical Dispositions .....	95
2.7.2	Learning through Practice - Situated Learning .....	97
2.7.3	Reflexivity and Agency .....	98
2.8	Conclusion.....	101
Chapter 3	Research Methodology.....	105
3.1	Introduction .....	105
3.2	Overview of the Research Process.....	105
3.2.1	Overview of Interviews.....	105
3.2.2	On Researching 'Others' .....	107
3.2.3	Participant Selection.....	108
3.2.4	Profile of the Development Workers and Missionaries in my sample.....	108
3.2.5	Interview Procedures.....	111
3.3	Analytical and Interpretive approach .....	112
3.4	Studying Cases .....	115
3.5	Conclusion .....	117
Chapter 4	Discourses of Development .....	118
4.1	Introduction.....	118
4.2	The Development Ideas and Narratives of Irish Development Workers and Missionaries .....	119
4.3	Discourses of Development .....	126
4.4	Discourses of Development and Tensions in the Development Project .....	136
4.5	Conclusion .....	156

Chapter 5	Experiences of Development Personal - Practice Groups.....	161
5.1	Introduction .....	161
5.2	An Overview of the Mix of Origins, Work Roles, Socio-Political Contexts.....	162
5.3	Irish Development Workers and Missionaries Common or Shared Experiences.....	165
5.4	Learning about Development for the ‘Personal Development’ Group .....	168
5.4.1	Origins and Motivations.....	169
5.4.2	Situated Learning and Work Experiences.....	170
5.4.3	Local Communities and Social Relations .....	174
5.4.4	Reflexivity, Agency and Change .....	176
5.4.5	Summary .....	177
5.5	Learning about Development for the Missionary ‘Personal Practice’ Group	178
5.5.1	Overview and Profile of the Missionary Personal and Practice Group.....	178
5.5.2	Origins and Motivations.....	179
5.5.3	Situated Learning and Work Experiences.....	181
5.5.4	Local Communities and Social Relations .....	186
5.5.5	Reflexivity, Agency and Change .....	189
5.5.6	Summary .....	192
5.6	Learning about Development for the ‘Personal and Practice’ Group.....	193
5.6.1	Origins and Motivations.....	194
5.6.2	Situated Learning and Work Experiences.....	195
5.6.3	Local Communities and Social Relations .....	199
5.6.4	Reflexivity, Agency and Change Within the Personal Participative Group.	202
5.6.5	Summary .....	203
5.5	Chapter Conclusions.....	204
Chapter 6	Experiences of Development Macro - Political Groups .....	208
6.1	Introduction .....	208
6.2	Learning about Development for ‘the missionary ‘Political Values’ Group .	213
6.2.1	Origins and Motivations.....	215
6.2.2	Situated Learning and Work Experiences.....	217
6.2.3	Local Communities and Social Relations .....	221
6.2.4	Reflexivity, Agency and Change .....	223
6.3	Learning about Development and the Missionary ‘Macro Geopolitical and Political Values’ Group.....	224
6.3.1	Origins and Motivations.....	225
6.3.2	Situated Learning and Work Experiences.....	226
6.3.3	Local Communities and Social Relations .....	227
6.3.4	Reflexivity, Agency and Change .....	228
6.3.5	Summary .....	229

6.4 Learning about Development for the Development Worker Geopolitical Group.....	230
6.4.1 Origins and Motivations.....	230
6.4.2 Situated Learning and Work Experiences.....	231
6.4.3 Local Communities and Social Relations .....	234
6.4.4 Reflexivity, Agency and Change .....	235
6.4.5 Summary .....	237
6.5 Learning about Development for The Development Worker ‘Geopolitical and Political Values’ Group.....	238
6.5.1 Origins and Motivations.....	239
6.5.2 Situated Learning and Work Experiences.....	239
6.5.3 Local Communities and Social Relations .....	244
6.5.4 Reflexivity, Agency and Change .....	247
6.5.5 Summary .....	249
6.6 Chapter Conclusions.....	251
Chapter 7 Conclusions .....	254
7.1 Introduction .....	254
7.2 Research Findings: Discourses of Development .....	257
7.3 Research Findings: The Process of Learning that Generates these Discourses ..	261
7.4 Concluding Remarks.....	268
Bibliography .....	272

## Summary

This thesis explores the varying discourses and concepts of ‘development’ used by those working in the development field, and the various biographical, institutional and macro-structural forces that shape them. It does so through a case study of missionaries and development workers from Ireland. Ireland’s history of engagement in development work provides an interesting case of ‘development work’ where missionaries dominated but have now been largely succeeded by a mix volunteers and professional development workers from a variety of occupational backgrounds, particularly in health and education.

The uniqueness of the Irish development field according to the OECD (1999) is the direct contact the Irish field has with the developing world. It also reflects the unusual degree to which the Irish social services field has been characterized by religious and civil society (NGO) service provision, intertwined with that of the state. This profile is reflected in the social services orientation of Irish development work as well as the role of religious and civil society-based practitioners.

Missionaries and development workers are immersed in a field which, according to Robert Chambers (2005, p.185), consists of “multiple realities - ecological, economic, social, political and personal”. These different realities are important because they structure the work and experiences of development. Thus, development workers and missionaries can experience and understand their work in different ways and in different realities, because “...who we are is formed by our admittedly fallible, reflections upon the world, meaning its natural, practical and social orders” (Archer, 2000, p.313).

In the development field knowledge is stratified between theory and practice both running in parallel lines. In the midst of these literatures the place of religion has been neglected and the role missionaries as development practitioners has been overlooked. More recently, authors have examined the individual development practitioner, and their work has focused on development worker motivations, values, work and biographies to get a better understanding of who these actors are and how they go about their work. This thesis endeavours to contribute to these debates by examining the development discourses of Irish missionaries and development workers and investigating the process of learning that generates these discourses and that occurs in a variety of employment, occupational,

biographical, political and regional contexts. This understanding of development is critically important as it shapes what kinds of development practices are thought to be reasonable and even ideal, and to whom they can be legitimately and ethically applied, and in which circumstances.

## Acknowledgements

This thesis would never have been completed without the support and help of a wide range of people. I would firstly like to thank my supervisor Professor Seán Ó Riain, to whom I am extremely grateful for his expert guidance, unstinting patience, support, encouragement, and advice throughout my work on this thesis.

I would like to thank the staff in the Department of Sociology Maynooth University and in particular the following who read various versions of this thesis: Professor Aphra Kerr, Professor Peadar Kirby, Professor John O'Brennan, I am also grateful to my post graduate peers in the Department who shared this journey with me. Thanks to Anne, Niamh, Aine, Emma, Eoin, Ivan, John Paul and Patrick.

I am extremely grateful to all the development workers and missionaries who participated in this research. Thanks to Marie Therese Fanning from Comhlámh, Sr Eileen Morrison and Fr Ed O'Connell for their assistance in setting up the interviews. A special thanks goes to Mike Kelly and Yseult Thornley for their help and support throughout my research.

Finally, thanks go to my family and friends, especially to Aengus and Jeromey. I am ever grateful to my parents Pat and Georgina who provided unfailing support and encouragement.

I also wish to acknowledge the financial support received from the Irish Research Council (IRC).

In memory of Pat, Georgina and Anne.



## List of Tables

---

Table 2.1	Meanings of Development and Religion over Time	41
Table 3.1	Gender Breakdown of the Sample.....	109
Table 3.2	Work Areas of Irish Development Workers Secular and Religious.....	110
Table 3.3	Regional Breakdown for the Occupational Areas Worked In.....	110
Table 4.1	Top 30 Development Ideas Mentioned.....	122
Table 4.2	Themes in the Development Narratives of Irish Secular and Religious Development Workers.....	125
Table 4.3	Personal and Practice Discourses of Development.....	130
Table 4.4	Geopolitical and Political Values Discourses of Development.....	133
Table 4.5	Combined Political Discourses of Development.....	135
Table 4.6	The Irish Development Worker and Missionary Discourses of Development.....	157
Table 5.1	Profile of Sample: Overview of the Mix of Origins, Work Roles, Socio-Political Contexts	164
Table 5.2	Profile of the Respondents with the Personal Development Discourse	169
Table 5.3	Profile of the Religious Personal and Practice Discourse.....	178
Table 5.4	Profile of the Secular Personal and Practice Discourse.....	193
Table 6.1	Profile of the Religious with the Political Values Discourse.....	214
Table 6.2	Profile of the Religious with the Geopolitical & Political Values Discourse.....	225
Table 6.3	Profile of the Secular with the Geopolitical Discourse.....	230
Table 6.4	Profile of the Secular with the Geopolitical & Political Values Discourse.....	239
Table 7.1	Summary of the Seven Development Discourses.....	258
Table 7.2	The Process of Learning for Each of the Discourse.....	264

## List of Abbreviations

---

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
ABP	Area Based Programme
ACP	African, Caribbean, Pacific
APSO	Agency for Personal Services Overseas
CoGP	Code of Good Practice
CONCORD	European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development
CSP	Country Support Paper
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DCI	Development Cooperation Ireland
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DfID	Department for International Development (UK)
EDF	European Development Fund
EEC	European Economic Community
EU	European Union
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GNP	Gross National Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ILO	International Labour Office
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMU	Irish Missionary Union
IMRS	Irish Missionary Resource Service
JAES	Joint Africa EU Strategy
MAPS	Multi Annual Programme Scheme
MGDS	UN Millennium Development Goals
MMM	Medical Missionaries of Mary
MPSS	Micro Project Support Scheme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NUIM	National University of Ireland Maynooth
OECD	Organisation for economic cooperation and development
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
ODI	Overseas Development Institute (UK)
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme
PSO	Programme Support Officers
PSS	Project Support Scheme
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SWAP	Sectoral Wide Approach Programme
TA	Technical Assistance
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United National Development Programme
UNHCR	UN High Commission for Refugees
UNHCHR	UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
U. S	United States of America
VSA	Volunteer Sending Agencies
VSO	Volunteer Services Oversea

### 1.1 Introduction

Ireland has a history of its citizens volunteering for work in developing countries. A long history of missionary activity prefigured the later involvement of other groups of workers, including volunteer and professional development workers from a variety of occupational backgrounds, particularly in health and education. Irish missionaries and development workers are immersed in a field which, according to Robert Chambers (2005, p.185), consists of “multiple realities - ecological, economic, social, political and personal”. These different realities are important because they structure the work and experiences of development. Thus, development workers and missionaries can experience and understand their work in different ways and in different realities, because “...who we are is formed by our admittedly fallible, reflections upon the world, meaning its natural, practical and social orders” (Archer, 2000, p.313). This study examines how development workers and missionaries understand, and construct, the meanings of development and how that process is shaped by a variety of employment, occupational, biographical, political and regional contexts. These meanings are critically important as they shape what kinds of development practices are thought to be reasonable and even ideal, and to whom they can be legitimately and ethically applied, and in which circumstances.

Ireland is a fruitful case for the examination of such processes. We can think of national ‘development sectors’ as containing a myriad of actors who operate at local, national and international levels. These development actors include the government and civil society. International NGOs, local NGOs and faith-based organisations are the main organisations that make up civil society. The Irish development sector has a long and changing history and has a similar range of actors. However, the pioneers of Ireland's overseas development were Catholic, faith-based organisations and missionary societies who entered the field in the early part of the twentieth century. The bishops conference of the Catholic Church set up Trócaire, as its official development agency, in 1973. The civil society sub-field came into existence with the foundation of Concern in 1968. The Irish State became involved in development in 1974 when the Government's development assistance programme came into being. The Irish development sector mirrors how,

historically, services have been delivered in the Irish welfare state. The religious in Ireland (particularly religious sisters) have a long history of involvement in service provision in the fields of health and education (Fahey, 2000). Irish missionaries are also heavily involved in health and education in developing countries. Religious and civil society organisations play a significant role in administering the Irish State's development assistance programme. The Irish development field is noted for the direct contact it has with developing countries (OECD, 1999). These direct contacts have been fostered by Irish development workers and missionaries who work for a variety of organisations, which include: the Irish Government, missionary organisations, aid and development NGOs. These workers comprise volunteers and professional development workers who work in an array of occupations.

The place of Catholic missionaries in the Irish development field is undisputed. Irish Catholic clergy were first recruited to work as missionaries by international missionary societies in the later part of the nineteenth century in order to fill the needs of the British empire (Cooke, 1980). The first twenty years of the twentieth century saw the establishment and growth of Irish missionary organisations (Cooke, 1980). The involvement of these missionaries in the development sector can be explained by the consistently high number of Catholic nuns and priests that Ireland produced over the years. This peaked in the 1960s and has been in steady decline ever since (Weafer, 2014). This sustained high production of nuns and priests in Ireland over several decades is a reflection of the historical dominance of the Catholic Church in every aspect of Irish life from sport to education to the mass media (Fahey, 1992). Catholicism played a central part in Ireland's struggle for independence (McKenna, 2006, White, 2010). Prior to independence from Britain the Catholic Church forged an alliance with Catholic politicians in Ireland. This alliance battled with the British government and gained control of Irish schools whilst also carving out a significant and powerful role in the provision of health care services (Hornsby-Smith and Whelan, 1994). The Catholic Church maintained these strong links with the newly independent State. As a consequence of its association with the anti-colonial struggle the Catholic Church became the 'Church of the people' (Hornsby-Smith and Whelan, 1994) and came to be ideologically central for a long period to defining what it meant to be Irish (McKenna, 2006). The provision of social services, along with the pastoral work of the male clergy, allowed the Catholic Church to become embedded in peoples' lives (Fahey, 1992). Fundamentally, it maintained an iron grip on post-colonial Irish society over several decades, so much so

that Catholics dominated the Irish population. The number of people who described themselves consistently as Catholic in the Census of population between the 1920s and the 1970s was 94%<sup>1</sup>.

In post-colonial Ireland “arguably, the most important model of womanhood outside marriage and motherhood was religious life” (McKenna, 2006, p.27) and single women had very little status in the new Ireland (McKenna, 2006). Female religious congregations grew in numbers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Females became important actors in the Irish Catholic Church, being revered and accepted in Irish society (McKenna, 2006). According to McKenna (2006) the religious life gave women an opportunity to gain a professional place in society because this life was deemed a profession in Ireland. Religious life also afforded women the opportunities to gain professional training, something which was very limited for them in Ireland due to resources, legislation and social mores (McKenna, 2006). Thus, nuns became a significant force in the provision of education, health and social services in Ireland. The numbers of female religious peaked at 16,000 in the 1960s. However, the 1970s saw a 70% drop in vocations (McKenna, 2006). In the 1960s nuns outnumbered the male clergy by two to one (Fahey, 1992). Furthermore, religious sisters did not confine their endeavours to the aforementioned professions in Ireland as many became missionaries. This offered an alternative to religious life in Ireland and missionaries were also highly regarded (McKenna 2006). The focus on Catholic missionaries in this thesis reflects this dominance of the Catholic religion and the large numbers of Irish Catholic priests and nuns who have worked on ‘the missions’.

Voluntary organisations and NGOs have complemented and indeed supplanted the Catholic Church’s provision of social services in Ireland. Similarly, there has been a significant secular influence on the Irish development field and particularly so from the 1970s. Secular Irish NGOs have become a driving force in the field of development and have garnered a positive international reputation for their activities.

This study analyses the development field as a contested terrain of ideas, policies and practices. These contestations take place along a number of significant lines.

---

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp8iter/p8iter/p8rrc/> (date accessed October, 2022)

Conceptually, ideologically, and morally, there is considerable debate as to what the very idea of development stands for. Central to this are debates focused on two sets of actors. First, given the history of missionary and colonial engagement, there is significant controversy regarding the contemporary place of religion and religious values in development. Second, as states, corporations and civic organisations have come to play a more central role, the role and practices of International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are also contested within the development field. This study compares the practices and perspectives of missionaries and development workers, including secular volunteers and professional development workers.

### **1.1.a Disputing Development**

The differing accounts of development provide the theoretical backdrop against which the discourses on development among Irish development workers and missionaries are formulated. "The scholarly definition of development has been elusive" (Viterna and Robertson, 2015, p.245). However, the debates have shaped, and continue to shape, the policies and practices of the various actors in the field of development including Irish development workers and missionaries. In the social sciences, and in development studies in particular, the characterisation, roles and practices of the development worker and missionary are a matter of controversy. The development field, furthermore, is striking for the strong overlap between the 'field of action' of development practitioners and the research fields that study this practice. While such overlaps are common (e.g., in business schools, in policy studies, and so on) they are particularly extensive in the development field, it would appear and, consequently, there is a deep interdependency between practitioner discourses of development and those in the academic and policy studies.

Why pay attention to development worker and missionary discourses of development, and the forces that shape them? Alternative development models, including human development, are those that come from the ground up (Pieterse, 2010). As Douglas (1980) remarks: "... it's people who have ideas and who influence institutions" (cited by Mosse, 2005, p.10). It is important, therefore, to examine the ideas of those who work at the forefront of development and to monitor the lifeworlds they inhabit because knowledge is gained through activity and interaction with other people (Sayer, 2010). Furthermore, it is also necessary to get behind the myths and models of development

policy and institutions to reveal the particulars of people's lived-in worlds (Long, 2001). It is important to examine the forces that shape the practitioner discourses because "...the way that we think, the premises we hold, the theories of cause and effect we invoke, the gaps in our curiosity are patterned by social actions and accountabilities" (Mosse, 2005, p.11). Examining the development discourse of development workers and missionaries draws attention to what the ends and means of development are or should be and how they are informed by the lived-in world.

Development as it is currently conceived dates back to the post-war era (Pieterse, 2010, Willis, 2005, Escobar, 1995). However, this does not tell the full story and post-colonial theorists argue that colonialism and development shouldn't be thought of as separate and distinct periods of history. Rather, they argue that the idea of development needs to be traced back to colonial times and that the processes and practices instituted back then are still in operation today (Kothari, 2005, Kenny, 2008, Willis, 2005). For these theorists colonialism produced an economic imbalance where the development of Europe is intertwined with the underdevelopment of Africa and Latin America (McEwan, 2019). Post-colonial analysis draws attention to the fact that colonialism was a system of rigid structures and profound inequality (Young, 2020). The ideas and practices included brutal power relations along with "paternalist feelings of responsibility towards 'natives' who needed to be civilised" (Rist, 2008,p.47). Further, as McEwan (2009, 2018) argues, global relations are still shaped by the power dynamics which have existed since the fifteenth century. These power structures are "now in the hands of development organisations such as the IMF and World Bank - controlled by former colonizers or current imperial states - who determine the fate of billions in the global south" (Sultana, 2019, p.32). In mainstream development discourses "the historical theft and exploitation that built the West at the expense of the rest are frequently overlooked or ignored" (Sultana, 2019, p.32). The post-colonial perspective draws attention to the fact that the very idea of development is a western construct and a Eurocentric form of knowledge.

This Western Eurocentric conception of development has seen significant generational changes since the 1940s. All through the generations economic discourses have dominated the thinking in the field, beginning in the 1940s with development economics which focused on economic growth. The 1950s saw the emergence of the modernisation theory which emphasised political and social modernization alongside growth. This perspective was concerned with building the nation state and fostering entrepreneurship

(Pieterse, 2010). The dependency theory of the 1960s, on the other hand, believed that it was not the internal features of the nation state that caused underdevelopment. The proponents of this theory argued, instead, that the problem lay with the structure of the world capitalist system, where capital accumulation led to underdevelopment (Pieterse, 2010, Rist, 1997). Developing countries became locked into a dependent relationship with core countries (Rapley, 2007). Neoliberalism emerged in the 1980s, and placed a strong emphasis on growth alongside deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation. Neoliberalism is focused on the liberalization and deregulation of economic transactions (Jessop, 2002). The state-provided services in areas such as education, healthcare, water, social security must be privatised (Jessop, 2002; Harvey, 2005). The political aspects of this paradigm involve rolling back state intervention, including the welfare state (Jessop, 2002).

The 1980s is regarded by many as the 'lost decade' in development. The debt crisis and the structural adjustment programmes had a highly detrimental effect on people's lives right across the board. This led to the birth of post-development in the 1990s, whose adherents had come to see development as a failed model and a redundant concept (Escobar, 1992,1995; Pieterse, 2010; Rapley, 2007; Rist, 2008). The idea of development for them "...stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. Delusions and disappointment, failures and crimes have been the steady companions of development and they tell a common story, it did not work"(Sachs 1992, p.1). Theorists such as Escobar (1995, 2012) drew attention to the power and knowledge of the development discourse that operated in the field. This discourse constructed a hierarchical relationship between the first world and the third world (Haggis & Schech, 2002). These theorists, amongst others, highlighted the technical nature of the development field and Escobar (1995, p.23) argued that: "Poor people came under the gaze of experts and were mere objects of knowledge and management and this allowed for a whole array of interventions to be put in place, in the areas, for example, of health, education, hygiene, morality". In the view of Escobar (1995), this has allowed for the removal of "...problems from the political and cultural realms and to recast them in terms of the apparently neutral realm of science" (Escobar, 1995, p.45).

In spite of the desire of the post-development theorists to discard development, alternative approaches came to the fore. Post-colonialism, whilst sharing the critiques of post-



development, offered important insights for understanding the logics of development which first emerged in colonial times. The framing of global relations can be traced back to colonialism. The post-colonial theorists argue that the the West and the Global South are framed in such a way that the west is seen as superior and the south as backward and ‘uncivilised’. This framing is used to justify interventions (Said, 2002; Willis, 2005). The global south was seen as in need of development, that these countries were lacking what the West had, and the West was best placed to intervene and bring about development. A consequence of this framing is the silencing of ‘subaltern’ voices. ‘Subaltern’ groups are those in society that are marginalised, excluded and disempowered (McEwan, 2019; Young, 2020). Post-colonial theorists make the case that there is a need for a space where ‘subaltern’ voices can speak rather than be spoken for (McEwan, 2019).

The dominance of economic perspectives of development has also been challenged by alternative approaches which include those rooted in ethics and human development. Development ethicists such as Goulet had campaigned since the 1950s for ethical evaluations to be at the centre of the development debate. These ethical judgements raise questions about what a good life is and what constitutes a just society (Goulet, 1997). Even as a concern with religion has waned, theorists have grappled with the idea of ethics in development since the 1950s (Gasper, 2005). This is central to the understanding of development workers’ practices and perspectives because ethical considerations can give the development practitioner "...valuable insights as to the profound significance of their interventions" (Goulet, 2006, p.xxxiii), so long as they "...keep their reflections firmly rooted and informed, by their development practice (Goulet, 2006, p.xxxiii). As a concept development ethics is concerned with the "...moral assessment of ends, means, and processes of local, national, international and global development" (Crocker, 2006, p. xiv). Gasper and Truong (2005, p.374) maintain that development ethics "...is a space of analysis, evaluation and action regarding the trajectory of societies, with special reference to suffering, injustice and exclusion within societies and between societies at a global scale". Goulet (2006) believes that "...value issues, never absent from development discourse, are not peripheral, mere extras after technical and economic analyses have been done. On the contrary they lie at the core of development thinking" (Goulet, 2006, p.xxxii). Goulet draws our attention to the fact that: “Ethical judgements regarding the good life, the just society and the quality of relations among people and with nature

always serve, explicitly or implicitly, as operational criteria for development planners and researchers” (Goulet, 1997, p.1161).

Human development is considered to be a normative and ethical approach and came to prominence in the 1980s. The human development / capabilities approach focuses on individual well-being and places people at the heart of development. This perspective considers development as a process of expanding people’s real freedoms, as well as their valuable capabilities (Alkire, 2010; Deneulin, 2013; Robeyns, 2016). The human development perspective “...raises issues of values, priorities and trade-offs so that people are better able to reflect profoundly on their circumstances and shape their respective societies” (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009, p.27). Furthermore, despite its popularity as a broad label, “human development” in practice incorporates a wide range of quite different themes and emphases, ranging from approaches that focus on basic needs, through others that focus on the development of individual and collective capabilities, to others focused on participation and on rights. Human development places people at the centre of development. It is important when adopting this frame that ‘subaltern’ voices are listened to and that it is a frame devoted to real participation and empowerment. It cannot be another interventionist model where all measures of human development are defined by the West with only token involvement of subaltern groups.

The development debate has seen different sets of ideas emerging across the generations since the 1940s. These differing positions have a significant bearing on development policies and practices. Different generations of development workers and missionaries have entered the field when particular sets of ideas have been in play. The debate highlights the range of ideas and concerns that development workers and missionaries can draw upon. Even though economic ideas have dominated the field, alternative and critical accounts such as post-colonialism have made new insights into development available to these workers. The importance of the post-colonial perspective is that it asks us to think about development in terms of the injustices and inequalities that are embedded in the capitalist system since colonial times. This contrasts with the standard development approach which typically sees poverty as a technical problem to be solved through various forms of intervention. The post-colonial perspective will provide a frame for identifying and exploring the various tensions within the development discourses of Irish missionaries and development workers.

### 1.1.b – Religion - From Colonialism to Development

Religion and religious actors of all faiths from Catholics and other Christians to Muslims have collaborated with colonialism and continue to be active participants in development. Religion has been marginalised in the development literature (Clarke, 2013; Tomalin, 2013; Tyndale, 2000; Ver Beek, 2000). However, in recent times there has been a turn to studying the link between religion (Christian, Muslim and other religions) and development (Haustein, 2021; Smith, 2017; Spies and Schrode, 2021; Tomalin, 2018, 2021). In common with a full reading of the history of the idea of development attention must be paid to the historical connection between religion and colonialism. The literature presents the case that religion, as well as religious actors, played a significant role in colonial expansion. In the colonial era the vanquished were forced to acquiesce broadly to the beliefs of the conquerors and this enormously facilitated control of their territories (Pearce, 1992). The “right to have colonies carried with it a duty to Christianise the colonised” (Bosch, 1991, p.227). The conversion of the indigenous people went hand in hand with European expansion. This conversion resulted in the erasure of indigenous religions which the missionaries considered to be inferior modes of religious beliefs and practices (Tomalin, 2006). To some extent, it also instilled in the indigenous people a belief that the way of life, culture and mores of the coloniser were superior (Maathai, 2010).

In recent decades policy-makers and practitioners viewed religion as counter-developmental (Clarke and Jennings, 2008). Religion was "considered to be a private matter, which should not affect the public sphere of civil society and the state" (Deneulin and Rakodi, 2011, p.49). In spite of these views there has been considerable research investigating the link between religion and development. There are distinct phases in the recent research examining the relationship between religion and development (Spies and Schrode, 2021, Tomalin, 2021). In the establishment phase authors such as Bradbury (2013) and Clark and Jennings (2008) made the case for a connection between development ideologies and human flourishing - well-being and Christian beliefs. Clarke and Jennings (2008) spoke of "...the commonalities between ‘faith’ and ‘development’ as normative ideals and moral discourses concerned with the welfare of humankind" (Clarke and Jennings, 2008, p.1). This included a discussion on the importance of religious values and practices in shaping people’s understanding of development (Spies and Schrode, 2021; Tomalin,2021). The second period of research shifted attention to

critiquing and problematising religion and development (Tomalin, 2021). The critiques again drew attention to the malevolent role of religion and, in particular, the colonial legacies. Bandyopadhyay (2019) argues, for example, that the colonial, Christian ideologies continue to infuse society with hegemonic undertones of privilege based on religion and race. Dominant, religious perspectives and voices can silence and marginalise other voices such as feminist or gender perspectives and sensitivities (Tomalin, 2021). In the view of Spies and Schrode the narrative that has been constructed is one where the "... developers and the religions of the world share the same values and the same ideals of peace, charity and a better life, which makes their cooperation only natural" (2021, p.4). The literature on religion and development highlights the need to examine the religious values which underpin the work and thinking of the Irish missionaries.

### **1.1.c Understanding Development Practitioners**

Development practitioners are key agents in the development field. Social scientists have tended to focus on secular development workers and have neglected missionaries. The literature is also focused on the international aid worker and there is less literature on local aid workers. However, the literature on the development practitioner has opened up a space for an "honest appraisals of the experiences of aid work and its challenges" (Fechter, 2012b, p.1476). Authors such as Ferguson (1994) draw attention to the discourse of development experts and how they problematize development issues. Ferguson, (1994), describes how development experts from the World Bank constructed a discourse about Lesotho as a 'less developed country' upon which development projects can be imposed. He also examines how the recipients made sense of these development interventions. As noted above, development ethicists see the need for development practitioners to have ethical frames and values and to reflect on these in light of their work in the field (Goulet, 2006). Up until recently the values, work and careers of aid workers have been neglected within the social sciences (Fechter, 2012a; Mangold, 2012; Roth, 2015).

In more recent times, however, academics in development studies and the social sciences have started to investigate aid / development practitioners (Fechter, 2012; Roth, 2015). "Acknowledging the role of the personal does not mean losing sight of development's

key objectives, but rather, in a complementary fashion, that such acknowledgement contributes to a more comprehensive and thus more accurate understanding of all actors in the development process" (Fechter, 2012a, p.1401). Fechter (2012a) further explains that focusing on the personal provides a complete understanding of how aid works and can help to improve practice. Aid workers are a special case, according to Fechter (2012a), because international aid workers live and work far away from their countries of origin. They are away from their support networks of family and friends. They have to negotiate new geographic, social and cultural environments in a world that is distinctly different from their real or normal life (Roth, 2015).

This particular field of literature addresses different aspects of the characterisations, roles, beliefs, work and life experiences of individual practitioners. The characterisation and role of development workers are discussed in terms of whether they are 'globalisers' employed by international organisations who promote the agendas of these organisations (Jackson, 2005). In a similar vein, Tvedt (1998) questions whether NGO staff "...are angels of mercy, government paid development diplomats, propagandists for a triumphant west?" (Tvedt, 1998, p.1). Goudge (2003) raises the issue of power in development. She argues that there is the "crucial role of white superiority in the maintaining of the whole structure of global inequality" (Goudge, 2003, p.8). An alternative view of development workers is given by Comhlámh (the agency for returned Irish development workers) who believe that global development work is about "carrying a critical perspective of global issues" (Comhlámh, 2004, p.3).

The notion of the development worker as an expert has existed since colonial times. The last phase of colonialism was the age of the expert, "who was nearly always white" (Vaux, 2001, p.48). Furthermore, Jackson (2005) states that "...the international development profession acts as a sort of a global rent an expert service. Development organisations work to facilitate the export of experts to the developing world, where their technological know-how and professional skills are in demand" (Jackson, 2005, p.65).

Another set of authors examines the motivations, beliefs and values of aid workers (De Jong, 2011; Fechter, 2012; Mangold, 2012 and Shutt, 2012). This body of literature assumes that "...aid workers' personal beliefs and attitudes are implicated in, and impact on, the outcomes of aid work" (Fechter, 2012a, p.1387). Aid work, according to Roth (2015), might be thought of as a calling or a vocation. The decision to go overseas is

driven by a personal sense of social justice or equality (Fechter, 2012a). The literature highlights tensions between personal and altruistic motives (Hancock, 1989; Goudge, 2003; De Jong, 2011; Fechter, 2012b). Fechter (2012b) also argues that people are motivated by personal and professional reasons. However, she maintains their interests gradually change over time. Mosse (2011) distinguishes between development professionals who are committed to 'purely technical universals' and professional altruists who are committed to 'moral universals'. Fechter (2012a) believes these distinctions are problematic and are more likely to be blurred.

The work and careers of aid workers are investigated within the realm of the sociology of work by Roth (2015) and Fechter (2016). Roth (2015) examines the careers of local and international aid workers and argues that aid work mirrors work practices in contemporary capitalist economies and is marked by short-term contracts, precarity and work life balance issues. Nonetheless, she believes that aid work provides individuals with opportunities to engage in meaningful work. Roth (2015, p.1) concludes that aid work is "ridden with paradoxes that are grounded in North/South inequalities and tied into neoliberalism". Eyben (2012) adopts a life course approach and draws attention to how biographies inform individual practitioners' experiences. She examines the life histories of a group of development semi-professionals. For Eyben (2012, p.1420) key events in their history "...shaped their consciousness and produced political effects that gave them the opportunity to influence development practice". For her their development practice was the art of making do, which made their agency matter.

Moving on from the career of the aid worker, the literature also addresses the reflective capacity of these workers. For example, Roth (2015) makes the point that volunteering may not help the communities that are supposed to benefit, but it does force them to "reflect on their actions, practices and behaviour and contributes to a cosmopolitan outlook" (Roth, 2015, p.47). Fechter (2012a) is of the opinion that "aid practitioners are not only well aware of what they do, but expend substantial efforts reflecting on what they are doing, why they are doing it, and what they should be doing. In this sense, the realm of beliefs, motivations and commitments represents a veritable underbelly of professional development discourse" (Fechter, 2012a, p.1393).

This field of literature has added greatly to our understanding of the motivations, work and careers of aid workers and this study now seeks to advance these understandings by

examining how these different aspects of aid workers' development journeys come together to form a set of values and experiences that shape and reshape their understanding of development. The literature has predominantly focused on the aid worker. This literature sheds light on the challenges faced by development workers which can also be applied to missionaries. How is the role of the missionary discussed in the literature?

#### **1.1.d Understanding Missionaries**

The development literature has also investigated the role of missionary groups and missionaries in development. Missionary groups have been, and continue to be, active in the field of development (Clarke 2008; Jennings 2013; Linden 2008), although the perceived role of missionaries has changed over the years. In the colonial era missionaries supported the activities of the colonisers and were engaged in coercive proselytization. The missionaries in their endeavours to convert people to the Christian faiths erased indigenous religious beliefs and local knowledge. They attempted to instil in the indigenous people a belief that the way of life, culture and mores of the coloniser were superior (Maathai, 2010). Their modus operandi was to build churches administer sacraments and educate the indigenous people so that they could 'receive the word of God'. In the colonial period of the nineteenth century the missionaries engaged in an explicit 'civilising mission' which involved evangelisation, the export of European culture and colonial, economic expansion (Hirono, 2008). The legacy of religious and missionary involvement in colonialism has resulted in religious actors being viewed with suspicion in the development field (Smith, 2017). This suspicion led to missionaries being "lampooned and pilloried as agents of imperialism, destroyers of indigenous cultures, ideologically driven manipulators of vulnerable natives" (Bradbury, 2013, p. 427). There are conflicting views in the literature on the rationale for missionary involvement in the provision of education services. For some, this activity is seen as altruism and an expression of benign concern for the well-being of children (Gallego and Woodberry, 2010). Others see these activities as a means of conversion and gaining new followers (Elliott, 1987; Roth, 2015; Robert, 2009).

The role of the missionary has changed and particularly so since the 1960s, Within the Catholic Church, Vatican II heralded a renewal of theology and led to changes in the role of missionaries, where they moved away from coercive proselytization. The aim of missionaries today, in Dorr's opinion, is to be in genuine solidarity with people who are

on the margins, receiving and giving in a spirit of dialogue and sharing. Authors such as Bradbury argue that: "Missionary commitment to evangelism, in its purest and most biblically shaped manifestations, is motivated by genuine concern for the others' well-being" (2013, p.420). Alongside the social welfare activities of the missionaries there is a commitment to justice and a compassion for the poor (Bradbury, 2013). Smith (2017) believes missionaries have been involved in activities which promote social change and these have resulted in generating positive development outcomes. Smith (2017) further argues that missionaries "because of the primacy of beliefs in their practice, have long reflected on issues of cultural sensitivity and how individual and social transformation are embodied" (Smith, 2017, p.28). Bosch (1991), sums up mission and the role of the missionary by arguing that there are two components, one spiritual and the other social. The spiritual is "to announce the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. The second (Social) is a calling to responsible participation in human society, including working for human well-being and justice" (Bosch, 1991, p.403). The changes in the role of missionaries and their concern for human wellbeing and social transformation needs to be considered with regard to power differentials where outsiders or Westerners bring their own ideas about what is good at the expense of local knowledge and practices.

The literature on religion and development, and on missionaries, illustrates the tensions experienced by missionaries. They have to grapple with both the social and spiritual aspects of their work. Is there a tension in proclaiming Jesus as the son of God through prayer and revealing the face of God in economic, social and political structures (Deneulin, 2013)? Relatively few studies have spoken to contemporary missionaries about their practices and perspectives and this research seeks to rectify this but, more importantly, it seeks to provide a comparative analysis of missionary and development workers and the processes through which they form certain discourses of development.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Irish development workers work in this field of contested ideas, roles and practices. According to development ethicists, it is also a field where ethical considerations should inform the policies and practices of all the actors in the field. More recently, however, authors have examined the individual development practitioner, whose work has focused on their motivations, values, work and biographies to get a better understanding of who



these actors are and how they go about their work. In this thesis I am striving to understand how Irish development workers and missionaries make sense of their experiences in development. This study is not simply about the discourses of development. It is about how these discourses are formed in the context of the setting of work and life experiences in the development field.

The aforementioned literature directs us to investigate the personal aspects of the development practitioners' work and lives in development in order to understand their motivations, work and careers as development workers. The literature on the beliefs, practices, reflexivity and agency is applicable both to development workers and missionaries. I am drawing on each of the different approaches to the personal to assist in answering my research questions. Understanding the beliefs, values, practices and reflectivity of these Irish development workers and missionaries informs how they arrive at their understanding of development are arrived at. Investigating the careers, life histories and contexts of their experiences in the development field assists in answering the second research question outlined above, namely what shapes the development understanding of Irish development workers and missionaries? This field of literature helps our understanding of what kinds of situations, work relations, for example, tend to generate certain frames. Why do different groups of development workers and missionaries come to frame development in different ways? How is this process shaped by occupation, gender, region, life experiences, and political and discursive context? My contribution to the literature is to draw on these different approaches not only to examine development practice but also to reveal the development understanding of the Irish development workers and missionaries.

There are two main questions that this study will address. Firstly, what are the variety of discourses of development held and used by Irish missionaries and development workers? Secondly, how are those discourses of development shaped by the biographies and contexts of development workers and missionaries both during and outside of development work?

There are two distinct aspects to the first research question. Firstly, given the malleability of discourses of development, and the variety of controversies therein, it is no surprise that development workers would hold different versions of those discourses. The study examines these varying discourses, and the dimensions along which they vary, to ask

what is shared and what is different across various discourses of development. It analyses how different, key discourses (e.g., personal development, needs, participation and politics) combine in different ways to form a variety of narratives of development for different groups of development workers. The second aspect of the first research question concerns how the varying discourses ‘manage’ core tensions in notions of development, for example, between the personal and the political, the religious versus the secular. There are also tensions between altruism and professionalism, altruism versus paternalism and empowerment versus paternalism. There is a tension between development and humanitarianism and development versus globalisation. Is there also a tension between the instrumental view of development (seeing development as a technical problem to be solved) and a critical view of development (questioning development interventions, policies and practices)?

There are three aspects to the second question outlined above. Firstly, what are the kinds of situations (work relations, social and cultural context, political context) which tend to generate certain development frames? Secondly, how do development workers and missionaries interpret these situations in particular ways? Thirdly, do different development workers and missionaries interpret similar situations in different ways and, if so, why? Is this due to gender differences or professional differences?

As this research is based on interviews with missionaries and development workers who are embedded in the Irish development sector it is therefore important to give an overview of the structure of this sector.

### **1.3 The Structure of the Irish Development Field**

This is a study of the Irish case of development workers and missionaries who are embedded in the Irish development field. Who are the main actors in the field? What activities are undertaken by these institutional actors? As previously discussed, the institutional/organisational structure of the Irish development sector consists of three main groups of actors: the State, the Church and Civil Society. The policy frames and work practices of these organisational actors have a significant bearing on the work experiences of development workers and missionaries. It is important, therefore, to examine the policy frames, structure and functioning of these organisations. Development workers and missionaries have themselves played a role in shaping the Irish

development field. Missionaries have been involved in the foundation of Irish development agencies. Through the aegis of Comhlámh, returned development workers and missionaries contribute to policy debates in the field. A distinguishing feature of the Irish development field is its focus on the social aspects of development (OECD, 1999). Education and health, in particular, form the core of the work activities of the State, civil society and religious actors in the field.

'Irish Aid' is the Government's programme for overseas assistance and is run by the Development Cooperation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The religious sector consists of missionary organisations and the Catholic Church's official overseas development agency, Trócaire. Misean Cara is the organisation that supports the development work of missionaries and currently has a membership of eighty-eight missionary organisations.<sup>2</sup> The civil society sub-field has over fifty development, or development-related organisations, affiliated to Dóchas (the meeting place and voice for development organisations in Ireland).<sup>3</sup> These NGOs, according to Dóchas, have "...shared commitments to human rights, justice and the eradication of poverty"<sup>4</sup>. The top five civil society agencies - based on funding from the Irish Government - are: Christian Aid Ireland, Concern, GOAL, Self-Help Development International (now Self-Help Africa) and Trócaire.<sup>5</sup> Members of the civil society and religious sectors in the field have links and co-financing arrangements with numerous international organisations. Ireland is a member of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD. A review by the OECD of Ireland's development assistance programme in 1999 commented that the programme "...is a good reflection of current international policy orientations aimed at eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable people-centred development in partnership with developing countries" (OECD, 1999. p.13).

### **1.3.a The State - Irish Government**

The Government's programme provides assistance to "over 130 countries worldwide, including nine partner countries where Ireland is engaged in long-term strategic assistance" (Irish Aid, 2022, p.10). The Irish Aid programme has been noted for the fact

---

<sup>2</sup> See (<https://www.miseancara.ie/who-we-are/about-us/> accessed January 2020).

<sup>3</sup> See (<https://www.dochas.ie/membership/current-members/> date accessed January 2020)

<sup>4</sup> see (<https://www.dochas.ie/about/> date accessed January 2020).

<sup>5</sup> Trócaire is a faith-based organisation, however, it is generally regarded and treated as a development agency.

that the "production of direct economic benefits for Ireland has never been an objective of the aid programme" (O'Neill, 1993, P.129). Ireland's Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) has fluctuated over the years, ranging from €1.9m or 0.05% of Gross National Income (GNI) in 1974 ODA to €51.4m, or 0.25% of GNI in 1986 and €976m, or 0.30% of GNI in 2021. This figure is still well short of the 0.7% GNI target. In 2020, the spending on Ireland's aid programme covered the following areas: agriculture and nutrition programmes, health and HIV, education services and humanitarian assistance in emergency situations (Irish Aid, 2022, p.106).

### **1.3.b Irish Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)**

Irish development NGOs played a significant part in the foundation of the development field. Dóchas is of the view that the development organisations they represent have "shared commitments to human rights, justice and the eradication of poverty"<sup>6</sup>. The first development agency in Ireland was Concern and it was founded by an Irish missionary in 1968. In 2020, Concern was working in 23 countries, 12 of them African (Concern, 2021, p.5). Nearly 90% of Concern's income is spent on development and relief with a further 2% spent on development education and advocacy (Concern, 2021, p.49). Concern's focus is on the social aspects of development and it operates the following programmes: Education; Emergencies and Health; Livelihoods; HIV and AIDS<sup>7</sup>. In the past Concern has sent many volunteers overseas. In the period 1968 to 1998, for example, they had in excess of 1500 volunteers working in developing countries (Farrar, 2002, p.219). The volunteers are typically overseas for two years. As a professional development agency Concern offers a career path for development workers. It has an internship and a traineeship programme to give recent Masters' graduates in key disciplines the practical experience to progress into more senior roles within the organisation.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Dóchas is a network to connect, inspire and represent people and organisations working for global justice. The purpose of Dóchas is to be a meeting place and a leading voice for organisations that want Ireland to be a world leader in efforts to bring about global justice. See <http://www.dochas.ie/pages/about/default.aspx?id=4> date accessed January 2018).

<sup>7</sup> See <https://www.concern.net/about/our-programmes> date accessed June 2021

<sup>8</sup> See <https://www.concern.net/get-involved/volunteer>, date accessed June 2021

GOAL was founded in Dublin in 1977 and in 2020 worked in 14 countries, focusing on the following areas: emergency response, health, nutrition and food security and Livelihoods (Goal, 2021, p.7). Goal has employed more than 2,300 development workers or, as GOAL calls them, 'GOALies'. There are more than 100 GOALies currently employed. These overseas development / humanitarian workers include: country directors; project managers; accountants; nurses; doctors; nutritionists; logisticians; administrative personnel and engineers.

Trócaire is the official overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland and was set up in 1973. According to their website, they were given a dual mandate from the outset - to support the most vulnerable people in the developing world while also raising awareness of development at home<sup>9</sup>. Trócaire has long-term programmes in 16 countries worldwide, 10 countries in Africa, 3 in Latin America and 3 in Asia and the Middle East. The key themes in Trócaire's programmes of work are: the promotion of livelihoods, governance and human rights and emergency preparedness and response (Maye, 2010). Trócaire's work in developing countries is divided between development activities and emergency relief. Advocacy and development education in Ireland are also important aspects of their work. The Trócaire Lenten campaign, as well as raising funds for the organisation, forms an important part of their advocacy work in Ireland. Maye (2010, p.17) holds that the founders of Trócaire "...recognised that the work of justice lay at the heart of good development work; that the beneficiaries of development projects must be the main authors of their own development, participating in the design and implementation of projects, not simply the objects of projects designed elsewhere by others". Trócaire's approach "has always been different from that of the other NGOs. Its focus was not so much on food aid or disaster relief but on tackling the root causes of hunger and poverty" (Murphy ,2012, p.49).

### **1.3.c Volunteer Organisations**

Volunteer organisations play an important role in the work and life experiences of Irish development workers. There are a number of organisations that send personnel to developing countries. The Agency for Personal Services Overseas (APSO) was the main

---

<sup>9</sup> See <https://www.trocaire.org/about/> date accessed June 2021

sending organisation in Ireland from the mid-1970s up until when it ceased operations in 2003. Following the demise of APSO, Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO), an international volunteer agency, started operations in Ireland in 2004.

APSO was established in 1974 as a state-sponsored body and received grant aid funding from the Government. APSO's funding had reached €17.6m in 2002, the year before it closed down. Skills-sharing and building capacity were the main themes in APSO's mission statements. Its dual role was both to send its own volunteers overseas and to co-fund the sending of NGOs' volunteers (Murphy, 2012). Missionary organisations and NGOs such as Concern used the services of APSO. Missionaries for example, accounted for 39% of APSO's total assignments in 1984. APSO's assignments increased over the years. In 1988, for example, it had a total of 435 assignments and this had risen to 1400 by 1998. In the year of their wind-down, in 2002, APSO had a total of 1274 overseas volunteers (APSO, 2003, p.2). Recruitment for APSO's direct operations ended in June 2001 with the last assignment finishing in 2003 (APSO, 2003, p.2). APSO had their own field staff in Africa and Central America who worked with local organisations assisting them in building capacity, assessing their needs and finding Irish development workers to work with them. In 2000 an audit was carried out on the services APSO provided. The view of their local partners was that the quality of Irish development workers was very high. Irish sending agencies also expressed a positive view about the service they received from the organisation (APSO, 2001, p.6).

APSO concentrated its efforts on improving living conditions through capacity building in the areas of health and education. These areas accounted for 60% of all placements in the 1980s. There was a broadening of the skills' base in the 1990s to include administrative functions driven by demand for these skills in developing countries. The 2000s was a difficult decade for attracting volunteers. This period also saw the economic boom in Ireland reducing the supply of development workers. Developing countries were also looking for more specialised development workers (APSO, 2001, p.8). African countries dominate the regional distribution of volunteers. In 1998, for example, 64% of the placements were to African countries while a further 13% went to Latin America and another 13% went to Asia (APSO, 1999, p.4).

APSO assignments were typically two years in duration, though they provided short-term placements along with election monitors. Their volunteers received the following: Pre-departure training; a grant towards pre-departure costs such as vaccinations etc; return travel; housing; a living allowance with a supplement for previous service; a resettlement grant depending on length of service (APSO, 1994, p.5). In the 1970s the type of volunteer tended to be inexperienced and some were recent graduates. In the late 1980s, however, APSO looked for people with greater experience. In 1985 their annual report noted that the people they were now sending out tended to be professionally qualified with work experience (APSO, 1986, p.9). They were looking for people that could work on their own and have the ability to work with local people in developing countries to help them gain experience and confidence (APSO, 1986, p.10). In line with APSO's demand for more highly skilled people and the increased numbers who were making a long-term commitment and a career in the development field, the age profile of the volunteers changed. Over 50% of those going overseas in 1985 were in their upper 20s (APSO, 1986, p.9). By 1998 this age group had declined to 40% of the total who went overseas. The numbers in the 40 plus age group increased to 21% of total volunteers. In 1984 60% of APSO volunteers were women while in 1988 they accounted for 58% of APSO volunteers.

With the demise of APSO, Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO), an international volunteer agency, set up operations in Ireland in 2004. The aim of VSO is to "actively engage Irish people to share skills, knowledge, and creativity and learning to build a fairer world" (VSO, 2011, p.4). VSO have placed over 200 Irish people in developing countries. In 2011/12, VSO Ireland sent 29 volunteers to work with 27 partners in seventeen countries in the fields of education, health, HIV and AIDS, in order to secure livelihoods and peace. Volunteers are the lifeblood of VSO and the organisation sees them as drivers of change who make a distinctive contribution to development. VSO's aim is: "...to recruit experienced and highly skilled professional volunteers from Ireland for our partners across the developing world and to ensure that they become agents of change both at home and abroad" (VSO 2013, p.24). VSO believe "International volunteers' work passes on fresh ways of thinking, while local staff and national volunteers bring cultural knowledge to programmes. In this way, we identify innovative solutions to development challenges and campaign for change" (VSO, 2019, p.4). VSO volunteers are recruited for both long-term and short-term placements. Like other Irish development agencies VSO places poverty at the top of their agenda and they are of the

opinion that, in order to “...end poverty, the relationship between socially excluded women and men and those who hold power must change. Poor people must have access to essential services. They must be able to work together to improve their lives, and have access to information and ideas that link them to the wider world” (VSO, 2011, p.7). VSO believes the “...distinctive contribution of volunteering to international development reaches beyond what money and other forms of technical assistance can accomplish. Volunteers effectively build capacity and raise awareness of issues of poverty, development and global interdependence” (VSO, 2011, p.6). VSO believes that: “Returned volunteers are extremely valued by VSO and VSO will seek to engage returned volunteers in our work in a more meaningful and structured way” (VSO, 2011, p.17). VSO Ireland works closely with Comhlámh, the agency for returned volunteers.

Returned Irish development workers founded Comhlámh in 1975, with the objective “...to enable persons who have rendered services overseas in developing countries upon their return to Ireland to bring to bear their own particular experience in order to further international development cooperation” (Comhlámh, 2020, p.2). Comhlámh provides a range of services for both volunteers and returned development workers. They are a source of information on volunteering for development in Ireland. They aim to strengthen their role and position as coordinator and advocate of good practice in volunteering for development; Comhlámh wants to promote and support volunteers and development workers to engage critically in volunteering and action for development.<sup>10</sup> In 2018 Comhlámh had four sources of funding: Irish aid; The European commission; NGOs and their own fundraising (Comhlámh, 2019, p.27), with the bulk coming from Irish Aid. Comhlámh formulated a code of good practice as a set of standards for Irish volunteer-sending organisations. The aim of the code is for volunteer programmes to be based on a belief in global justice and on good development practice and to address identified needs in partnership with local projects and communities. For Comhlámh, overseas development work and volunteering are part of a broader commitment to global development and solidarity. Volunteers and development workers, according to Comhlámh, work in solidarity for a just, equitable and sustainable world.<sup>11</sup> Comhlámh believes that critical engagement with the issues of development is an important aspect of being a member of their organisation.

---

<sup>10</sup> See <http://comhlamh.org/about-us>, date accessed June 2012

<sup>11</sup> See <http://comhlamh.org/code-of-goodpractice> date accessed may2018



### 1.3.d Missionaries & Missionary Organisations

Even though missionary numbers have declined sharply in recent years, missionaries and missionary organisations are still an important part of the Irish development field. This is one of the unique features of the development sector in Ireland and missionaries were the first to establish direct contacts with developing countries. In recognition of this role, and to streamline the allocation of resources to missionaries following the closure of APSO, the Irish Missionary Resource Service (IMRS) was set up in 2004. The role of this organisation was to support the work of Irish missionaries. In 2008 it was renamed Mísean Cara to reflect their "...role as an Irish missionary development organisation" (Mísean Cara, 2008, p.11). Mísean Cara's "... primary objectives are to access, administer and distribute funds for the overseas development work of its member organisations; to support its member organisations to increase their capacity to deliver significant results through high quality development projects according to best practice" (Mísean Cara, 2012, p.4). Mísean Cara functions as a mechanism for professionalising and integrating the work of Irish missionaries into the mainstream of the Irish development field. There are 88 organisations affiliated to Mísean Cara. In 2020 they funded 384 projects in 51 countries with a financial outlay of €13.7m in the areas of education, health, livelihoods, human rights, emergency/humanitarian response (Mísean Cara, 2021, p.2). The geographical spread of Mísean Cara's expenditure follows the pattern of Irish Aid and NGO spending with African countries receiving the majority of the funding. The themes of poverty, needs, capacity- building and participation are evident in Mísean Cara's values.

In order to clarify and define the role of the Irish missionary in development, Mísean Cara devised in 2018 what they call a missionary model of development. This model has come up with five features which describe the unique way missionaries do development work. These features are: Missionaries cross boundaries in a variety of ways; have long-term commitment and local presence on the ground where projects are being implemented: (this provides missionaries with a high degree of credibility, trust and influence within the communities where they work); they have a personal witness of commitment to Christian and missionary values (they are dedicated to their work, have a simple lifestyle and have solidarity with the poor); Prophetic vision to take action to address community problems; they adopt a holistic approach: missionaries see and treat individuals and communities not just as beneficiaries of a specific project, but as dignified human beings

with a wide range of capacities, needs and rights to be addressed (Misean Cara, 2018, p.1). Moreover, missionary development projects within this approach to development:

"...all take their ultimate inspiration from the Christian values, ethos and approaches of the organisations that implement them. Core principles and concepts such as human dignity, social justice, option for the poor, solidarity, subsidiarity and care for creation are fundamental to the way in which projects are designed and implemented for the benefit of poor, vulnerable and marginalised people throughout the world. Projects are also influenced by the particular key commitment or 'charism' (spiritual gift) of the implementing congregation. Some, such as Misean Cara members, further emphasise the related core values of respect, justice, commitment, compassion and integrity" (Misean Cara, 2018, p.1).

It is true that Misean Cara's definition of the development work of Irish missionaries is similar to traditional development NGOs. This definition however, isn't devoid of religious principles.

Irish missionary numbers have been in steady decline in recent decades. In 1981 there were 5424 Irish missionaries abroad (Holmes, Rees, Whelan, 1993, p51). This figure had dropped to 2,387 in 2004 and to 1,600 by 2014<sup>12</sup> Missionary societies were the first to enter the Irish development field. European religious and missionary organisations such as the Spiritans, the Divine Word missionaries and the Society of African Missionaries came to Ireland in the mid to late 1800s. These organisations set about recruiting Irish priests and nuns for work on the missions. Alongside these international organisations Irish missionary groups sprang up in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Bishop Joseph Shanahan, a Spiritan who trained in France, went to Africa in 1903 and saw the need for the education of women in Africa. To do this, he decided to recruit Irish nuns and set up the missionary society of the Holy Rosary in 1924 (Lynch, 2006). Bishop Shanahan also ran a large diocese in Nigeria and was looking for a group of dedicated missionary priests and this led to the foundation of St Patrick's Missionary Society in 1930. Other Irish missionary pioneers were Fathers Edward Galvin and John Blowick who established the Maynooth Mission to China, now the Columban Fathers, in 1918 (Collins, 2017, O'Murchú, 2014). Mother Mary Martin, another innovator amongst Irish missionaries, founded the Medical Missionaries of Mary (MMM) in 1937.

Irish Missionary societies are engaged in a range of activities. The Medical Missionaries of Mary (MMM), for example, are religious sisters who provide holistic healthcare with

---

<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.missionalive.net/directory/survey> date accessed May 2012 & See <https://www.independent.ie/life/irish-missionaries-they-havent-gone-away-you-know-date> accessed May 2020

a particular care for women and children. MMM's are serving in fourteen countries around the world, in Africa, Europe and the Americas. According to their website they are sent forth to heal the world and relieve suffering in areas of the greatest need.<sup>13</sup> The Missionary Sisters of the Holy Rosary are also based in fourteen countries and work in education and health. Capacity building and fostering the dignity and support of women and families are the aims of this group. Their stated mission is: "...to nurture and share the Good News with those in any kind of need, through the ministries of healing, education, pastoral work and community development, always searching for new ways in which to nurture the seed that is Christ in every culture, the living hope of liberation."<sup>14</sup>

The missionaries of the Society of St Columban are involved in reaching out to the margins of society and "believe that the Gospel of Jesus Christ demands that his followers, i.e., the Church, challenge the scandals of poverty and violence"<sup>15</sup>. This groups aims to foster vibrant Christian communities wherever they go, restoring dignity to the marginalised and equipping them to challenge the roots of the poverty and social injustice which are impacting heavily on their lives.<sup>16</sup> St. Patrick's Missionary Society (The Kiltegan Fathers) has seventy-five years of hands-on experience working in twelve different developing countries in Africa, South America and the Caribbean. They look after the spiritual and material well-being of people.<sup>17</sup> They are also engaged in a wide variety of projects for the betterment of people's material lives.<sup>18</sup> This society of missionary priests "... has been proclaiming the Gospel message to different peoples around the world, offering education and development in a variety of situations, and nurturing Church communities to maturity" (St. Patrick's Missionary Society, 2021, p.2).

In summary, the Irish development field, in line with international practice, is becoming a highly professionalised sector. There is a secular / religious divide in the mission statements and values of the different actors in this field. Religious values are embedded in the values and policy frames of the missionary organisations. The social aspects of development are part of the policy frames and activities of Irish NGOs and the

---

<sup>13</sup> See <https://mmmworldwide.org/what-we-do/> date accessed June 2020).

<sup>14</sup> See <http://mshr.org/index.php?page=inspiration>, date accessed June 2020).

<sup>15</sup> See <https://columbas.ie/who-we-are/> Date accessed June 2020

<sup>16</sup> See <http://www.columbans.co.uk/what-we-do/worldwide-missions/> date accessed, May 2020

<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.spms.org/stpatricksmissonarysociety/Main/About%20Us.htm>, date accessed May 2012

<sup>18</sup> See <http://www.spms.org/stpatricksmissonarysociety/Main/About%20Us.htm> date accessed, May 2012

Government's overseas development assistance programmes. Health, education and emergency relief are the three main areas of work. Development workers, whether they are volunteers or development professionals, along with missionaries, continue to play a significant role in the sector.

Outlined above is the structure of the Irish development field from which my sample was drawn. I interviewed sixty people, missionaries and development workers who worked in either Africa or Latin America. A small number worked in both regions. The sample represents a wide range of generations and is gender balanced. The sample contains a number of distinct occupational groups including those working in health care, community development, priests who have no other occupational specialism and professional development workers.

## **1.4 Thesis Organisation**

### **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter first gives an overview of the contested terrain of the theories of development. It traces the historical roots of development back to the colonial era. The chapter also sets out the ideas of development that have emerged in the different generations since the 1940s. The chapter examines critical accounts such as post-colonialism which draw attention to how the idea of development is a Western construct and a Eurocentric form of knowledge. This perspective alerts us to how global relations are still shaped by the power dynamics which have existed since colonial times. The theorists who are proponents of this approach to development ask us to think about how development is framed and who frames it, thus enabling us to bring issues such as injustice and inequality to the fore when discussing development. It provides part of the overall analytical frame for understanding the tensions in the development narratives of the Irish development workers and missionaries.

The chapter also draws on alternative perspectives such as ethical approaches to development in order to highlight the varying objectives and methods of the different development theories. The ethical perspective highlights what development ethicists see as the need for ethics and values which should underpin development thinking, policies and practices. These development theorists are concerned that well-being and themes such as justice must be at the core of any idea of development. The human development approach, as well as Robeyns' modular capabilities approach, are discussed because they

are key components of the analytical frame for understanding the development narratives of the Irish development workers and missionaries. The chapter also examines the literature on the practices of the various actors in the development field including NGOs and individual development practitioners. At the individual level, the beliefs, motivations, roles, characterisations and expectations are examined. In addition, the chapter discusses the contested role of religious beliefs in development and gives an overview of the definitions of mission.

This chapter also sets out the literature I am drawing on for my analytical frame. The literature from cultural and realist sociology focuses on the ethics, beliefs, commitments, reflections and agency of individual actors. Here the work of Archer (2000) and Sayer (2005, 2011) is instructive. These are important elements of who the development workers and missionaries are, their values and beliefs and how they reflect and act on them. Another set of literature discusses the nature of situated learning and the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) is informative here. These authors focus on how individuals learn through practice. This literature informs the approach I am taking which examines the process of learning about development from their motivations to learning through their practice and reflections on their journey through the development field.

### Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This research adopts an interpretive, qualitative approach. This study is a case study examining, in particular, the developmental understanding of Irish development workers. The Irish case contains a comparative analysis of two distinct groups of actors: missionaries and development workers. There is a further, comparative element in that these actors are working in, or have worked in, either Africa or Latin America. Furthermore, it describes the coding of the data and the identification of the range of ideas of development used. The procedure that will be used in the categorization of these development ideas into themes will be outlined. The process by which the identification of development discourses will be described.

The chapter gives an overview of the research process including participant selection, the profile of the sample and the interview procedures. The chapter sets out the analytical and interpretive approach adopted in the analysis of the semi-structured interviews. The chapter will also set out the process of interpretive analysis in the thesis such as the frame which will be employed in chapters five and six for understanding the process of situated

learning through which these discourses are generated. This frame includes: their entry and motivations for becoming development workers; their work practices, including changing work roles, careers and workplace relations; their local communities and social relations; the degree to which they engage in reflexivity, agency and change. It will also take account of the generational periods when the development workers and missionaries entered and worked in the development field.

#### Chapter Four: Discourses of Development

The discourse of development that missionaries and development workers adopt – in whole, in part or in combination – implies a particular idea of who they are as development workers and missionaries. Chapter Four examines how Irish development workers and missionaries understand and conceive development. There are three stages in the strategy I adopt in order to analyse the rich descriptive accounts in the interviews. In the first I will identify the development ideas mentioned in the interviews. This process yields a broad range of more than thirty ideas. The overarching theme that links these ideas is that people are considered to be the ends of development and a concern for their well-being is held and articulated by all the interviewees. This general understanding articulates a broad, human development approach to development.

The second stage involves coding this range of ideas into themes. Within the broad frame of a dual human development and post-colonial approach these ideas congregate around seven themes. The first theme is personal development and there are religious and secular versions of this. Personal development sees people as the ends of development, but also raises the question, is there a sense of liberalism in their views "...characterised by a respect of the freedom of people to pursue their own conception of the good" (Deneulin, 2002, p.3)? Furthermore, how is this balanced with a sense of the common good? The second religious version of personal development includes references to the dignity of the person and their spiritual well-being. The third brings together ideas centred on basic needs, functionings and capabilities. The fourth theme focuses on the participative aspects of development. The fifth is the set of ideas concerned with the micro-structural constraints that impede human development, such as criticism of development practice. The sixth theme captures the critiques of development at macro-organisational / institutional level (such as ideas concerning geopolitics, structural adjustment, aid and the role of INGO), which form quite distinctive constraints on human flourishing. The last brings together political ideas that focus on justice, rights and raise concerns about

democracy and political institutions. In order to analyse these themes further within a development framework I will begin by mapping these themes on to Robeyns' (2017) modular framework in the capabilities' approach. In the second stage of this analytical process, I will include an exploration of the meaning of these themes, through an analysis of the narratives of the development workers and missionaries. Part of the analysis of the narratives will be to highlight any regional or group differences.

The third stage in the analysis seeks to identify whether there are clusters of themes that come together to form distinct development discourses which different groups of respondents share. These comparisons help to address the first part of research question one, as outlined above. This stage analyses how different key themes (e.g., personal development, needs, participation, and politics, etc) combine in different ways to form a variety of discourses of development for different groups of development workers. This analysis reveals that there are seven different discourses of development. The chapter then examines these seven discourses in order to address the second part of the first research question, namely: How do those varying discourses 'manage' core tensions in notions of development? Again, the post-colonial perspective will be the frame that I will use to explore these tensions.

### Chapters Five and Six: Experiences of Development

The aim of chapters five and six is to address the second research question: What shapes these discourses of development? In other words, why do some development workers and missionaries adopt certain ideas and discourses while others adopt different discourses. These chapters will explore the kinds of situations that generate the different discourses as outlined in chapter four. The analytical frame that will be used in chapters five and six is the literature on situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991) which describes the process of learning that generates the discourses. The frame also includes the work of Sayer (2005,2011) and Archer (2000) on ethics values, agency and reflexivity. To understand the nature of the work of the missionaries and development workers I will draw on the literature on the development practitioner; the nature of mission and missionary work.

The literature on the development practitioner and missionary raises tensions relating to who they are. For the development worker there are questions about their identity. For

example, are they globalisers? How do they manage their status or power positions and whether they are viewed as the expert? Is there an ethical negotiation of these tensions? Do they draw on the ethical frame of human flourishing and a concern for people's well-being? How do they negotiate the personal and professional motivations? How do the missionaries negotiate the tension between the spiritual and the social? How do the work practices of the development workers and missionaries reflect their ethics and motivations? How do these workers reflect on their ethical dispositions in light of their work and life experiences?

The post-colonial literature raises tensions about the work practices of the development worker and missionary. Are they engaged in interventionist forms of work practices? To what extent do they listen and involve the 'subaltern' voices in their work? Or is their work merely the imposition of Eurocentric forms of knowledge? In order to explain fully the development narratives of Irish development workers it will be important to set out and understand the totality of these workers' development lives, from their motivations through their professional milieus, including religious, and their work and living situations. Thus, these chapters will outline the conditions that shape and reshape their understanding of development. In examining these conditions, chapters five and six will also examine the generational, regional, cultural and political context of the development worker and similar missionary experiences. These contexts are important because the lives and work of development workers and missionary are structured by the world they inhabit. Political decisions, poverty, war and environmental conditions all shape what they can and cannot do.

## Chapter 7 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter gives a summary of the central arguments of the thesis. It summarises the answers to the two research questions posed in Chapter One.



## **Chapter 2 Explanatory Frame for Understanding the Theory and Practices of Development**

---

### **2.1 Introduction**

This thesis is primarily built around the literature in the development field which is split between theory and practice, a divide which has generated a divergence between discourse-related and instrumental studies (Kothari, 2005). A key feature of this review will be to identify the main currents in this literature alongside critical and alternative accounts such as post-development and post-colonialism. The thesis also engages with the literature on religion and development and, in particular, on mission and post-colonial accounts of mission. This review of the development literature, and the thesis more generally, links these two sets of discourse-related and instrumental studies to seek to understand the social, religious, institutional and political conditions that shape development discourses.

This chapter reviews the main currents in the debates about discourses of development and the place of religion in development in order to identify the dominant ideas of development and the various criticisms of them. In particular, this literature review investigates the internal diversity of development ideas within the broad human development paradigm. In order to understand this diversity, I use the capabilities framework as outlined by Robeyns to analyse the varying dimensions of these development discourses.

This chapter also explores the instrumental-practice aspects of the development literature, focusing, in particular, on studies of the different aspects of the roles, beliefs, work and life experiences of development workers and missionaries. In order to understand fully the processes through which these discourses of development are formulated the thesis also draws on that area of the literature which rests within the domains of cultural and realist sociology. Here I draw on the work of Margaret Archer and Andrew Sayer with particular reference to the role played by values, beliefs, commitments, agency, reasoning and reflexivity in shaping and reshaping people's attitudes and practices.

In summary, these areas of the literature constitute the analytical framework which guides the analysis in the three empirical chapters in this thesis

## **2.2 Colonialism, Religion and Development: A Historical Overview**

The starting point of this literature review is, therefore, to give an overview of the development debate. In development studies, theorists argue that the idea of development first emerged after World War II. Post-colonial theorists on, the other hand, believe that the ideas, processes and practices of development have their origins in colonial times and processes. Willis (2005) puts forward a cogent argument as to why it is necessary to include a discussion of colonialism with development. Firstly, colonialism formed hierarchical linkages between territories and states across the world, which in essence was the forerunner of globalization. Secondly, and more importantly, colonialism embedded certain power relations which in many cases continue to this day. The question then is, how is colonialism defined and what are the legacies and continuities which are incorporated into development?

### **2.2a Macro Account of Colonisation and Development**

We begin with a brief overview of colonialism and development in the two continental regions of particular interest to this study, Latin America and Africa. Colonialism is defined as the political control of peoples and territories by foreign states (McEwan, 2019, Willis, 2005). The European colonizer countries, according to McEwan (2019, p.106), drew "... distant lands into a capitalist world system of production, distribution and exchange, therefore binding the colonies and the metropolitan centres in a relationship of unequal power and dependence". There are two main forms of colonialism. In the first, colonizers take over the land and then administer and tax it. They maintain control over these territories using occupying troops, administrators, merchants and missionaries (Young, 2020). The second form involved much the same practices as the first, though with the additional crucial feature of the settlement by Europeans of the colony as their permanent home. This was the earliest form of colonialism which began with the Spanish and the Portuguese colonisation of the Americas in the fifteenth century (Young, 2020).

At the time of the Spanish and Portuguese conquests in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries European countries were in transition from feudal to industrial, capitalist

societies and mercantilism - the search for wealth through trade - was the dominant economic strategy (Pearce,1992, McEwan, 2019). Pearce (1992, p.8) maintains that the "... search for gold was the principal human motivation of the conquest and this fact alone was to have important implications for the future development of Latin America". The Spanish settlers were given a stake in the human and natural resources of an area. The local Indian population were given as labourers to the settlers with the only requirement that the Indians be instructed in the Catholic Faith (Pearce,1992). Therefore, from the beginning, settler colonialism was intimately linked with ideas of mission and conversion and with the institutional expansion of the Roman Catholic Church.

Furthermore, these relations of conversion were based on power and domination. The Spanish conquest was a particularly brutal conquest and led to the almost total destruction of indigenous civilisations (McEwan, 2019, Pearce, 1992). The slaughter of the indigenous people was intended to terrorise entire peoples into submission, including religious conversion (Pearce, 1992). Pearce (1992, p.16) further argues that: "the fundamental features of the present day Latin America were established in the Sixteenth century". The conquest laid the foundations for countries whose structure consists of a hierarchical social pyramid based on race (Pearce, 1992). Spurred on by mercantilism this first phase of colonialism combined the forces of economic, social, cultural and political power (McEwan, 2019).

Latin America emerged from colonialism when independence was won in the eighteenth century. Pearce (1992) maintains that local elites were more concerned with how to participate and benefit from the rise of capitalism in Europe. The Spanish and the Portuguese left a legacy where the concentration of wealth was in the hands of a tiny minority, while the rest lived lives of subsistence (Pearce, 1992). The elites were only interested in profiteering from the export trade and had no interest in building up the local productive forces in the economy. This strategy, combined with the emergence of an international economy in the 1800s, led each Latin American country to specialise in a particular export crop (McEwan, 2019, Pearce, 1992). This strategy left the economies vulnerable to crop failures and price fluctuations and crises in global capitalism which ultimately profoundly shaped each country's pattern of development (McEwan, 2019, Pearce, 1992).

The nineteenth century saw the expansion of capitalist imperialism. This required "... the large scale extraction of resources to support rapid industrialisation in Europe and also to create new markets for the manufactured goods" (McEwan, 2018, p.107). In this period the European powers staked claims to the continent of Africa (Meredith, 2006, Reader, 1998). The Berlin conference of 1884-85 carved up Africa amongst the colonial powers (Reader, 1998). This conference was "... larded with expressions of good intent concerning Africa, was a strictly European affair, a round of diplomatic haggling enlivened by the Frisson of high-powered scheming and competition" (Reader, 1998, p.343). Here the colonizers used inaccurate maps and drew straight lines not taking into account "... the myriad of tradition monarchies, chiefdoms and other African societies that existed on the ground. In some cases, African societies were rent apart" (Meredith, 2006, p.1). The Berlin Conference, according to Ndlovu-Gatsheni, "dramatized and confirmed the fact that Europeans did not consider those people found in Africa to be human beings that deserved to be treated with dignity. The logic that informed the slave trade also informed the partition of Africa" (2014, p.35). Europe's new colonial territories enclosed hundreds of diverse and independent groups with no common history, culture, language or religion (Meredith, 2006, Harden 1993). By the time the 'scramble' for Africa was concluded, 10,000 polities had been combined into forty European colonies or protectorates (Meredith, 2006, p.1). European rule was enforced by treaty and conquest. Meredith (2006) argues that the thin white line of colonial authority was tested but never broken. He further contends that, throughout Africa colonial administration was severely lacking in men and resources. The colonial Governments had an expectation that European capital would shoulder the cost of the transformation in Africa and would pay for the administration and security of these counties in return for exclusive rights to exploit their resources (Meredith, 2006).

For most African colonies negotiations which led to independence in the 1960s followed periods of prolonged military and political struggle (Hargreaves, 2014). Underlying these negotiations was the concern of the decolonisers to reproduce some of their own institutions and values in Africa such as educational systems, market economies and self-governing nation states. Indeed, many of the African interlocutors accepted what was on offer from their former colonial masters (Hargreaves, 2014). Africa, therefore, settled for and embraced the existing colonial state as the template for the post-colonial state. As a consequence, Africans today "... are entrapped within a modern world system that is

racially hierarchised, patriarchal, sexist, Christian-centric, Euro-American-centric, hetero-normative, capitalist, and colonial in architecture” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014, p.35).

Colonialism and development shouldn't be thought of as separate and distinct periods of history. There are “temporal continuities between the colonial and post-colonial or development periods in terms of discourse and practices” (McEwan, 2019, p.115). On the one hand the structures of colonialism have been overturned in the process of decolonisation. On the other hand, colonialism has left legacies which include: political, legal, administrative, educational and religious systems that reflect past European influence (McEwan, 2019). Consequently, development implies more than progress and economic growth. It is a Western model of judgement and control over life (Walsh, 2010). In this world “peripheral nation-states and non-European people live today under the regime of ‘global coloniality’ imposed by the United States through the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), the Pentagon and NATO” (Grosfoguel, 2007, p.217).

## **2.2b Missionaries from Colonialism to ‘Development’**

In the literature on religion, mission and colonialism a strong case is put forward arguing that the church and missionaries played a significant role in colonial expansion. The first phase of colonialism, the Spanish and Portuguese conquest of the Americas, was conducted with the blessing of Pope Alexander VI and both kingdoms were staunchly Catholic (Pearce, 1992). The “right to have colonies carried with it a duty to Christianise the colonised” (Bosch, 1991, p.227). In the colonial era “Christendom discovered with a shock that, fifteen centuries after the Christian church was founded, there were still millions of people who knew nothing about salvation and who since they were not baptised were all headed for eternal punishment” (Bosch, 1991, p.227). The term mission “presupposes an established church in Europe which dispatched delegates to convert overseas people and was as such an attendant phenomenon of European expansion” (Bosch, 1991 p.228). Dorr (2000) describes the colonial era as the “crusader” model of mission. The conversion of the indigenous people also involved the erasure and replacement of indigenous religions which the missionaries considered to be inferior modes of religious beliefs and practices (Tomalin, 2006). Maathai, commenting on the missionary activities in Africa in the nineteenth century, gives a good overview of the negative aspects of ‘spreading the good news’ and states that:

“Evangelism was the beginning of a deep cultural inferiority complex among their African converts. Many assumed that God favoured them less, that God had decided not to reveal himself to them directly but only to others - the Europeans - who were now offering them God’s messages” (2010, p.38).

Therefore, according to Maathai (2010), religious conversion instilled in the indigenous people a belief that the way of life, culture and mores of the coloniser were superior. In order to accept the bible, the Africans were taught that their own way of life would have to change so that they would be welcomed into this superior culture. Maathai (2010) also draws attention to the fact that Christianity instilled a focus on the afterlife rather than on this one, permitting institutions such as the Church to encourage people to remain passive.

Missionary activities during the early colonial period extended beyond the religious sphere into the cultural and political. The missionaries actively supported the reign of the colonisers. The vanquished were forced to acquiesce broadly to the beliefs of the conquerors and this enormously facilitated control of their territories (Pearce, 1992). In the later colonial periods of the nineteenth century the missionaries engaged in an explicit ‘civilising mission’ which involved evangelisation, the export of European culture and colonial economic expansion (Hirono, 2008). This was a common imperialist project of the Christian missionaries and the settler (Haustein and Tomalin 2018). The civilising mission of the protestant evangelists, according to Comaroff and Comaroff, “was simultaneously symbolic and practical, theological and temporal. The goods and techniques they brought with them to Africa presupposed the messages and meanings they proclaimed in the pulpit and vice versa. Both were vehicles of moral economy that celebrated the global spirit of commerce, the commodity and imperial marketplace.” (1991, p.9). This Christian Mission became what Haustein (2021) calls the development scheme of the colonial push for Africa. In this civilising mission the activity of the Christian missionary in Africa “reshaped sociality, person-hood, and everyday practices, preparing Africans to be docile laborers at the bottom end of the emerging capitalist economy and docile citizens in the newly forming states” (Comaroff, 2021, p.448). Comaroff and Comaroff (1991) maintain evangelism on its own cannot be regarded as an independent motor of social change. However, the missionaries were able to infuse the imperial colonialism with religious sentiments (Haustein and Tomalin, 2017).

Missionaries provided key social care services in the areas of education, health, vocational training and advocacy (Haustein, 2021, Tomalin, 2018). The provision of

these services acted as proof of the ‘civilising mission’ (Tomalin, 2018) and compensated for the failures of the colonial economies and Governments. The missionaries continued these activities throughout the period of decolonisation with the blessing of the post-colonial governments. In many ways the missionaries, through their place in the provision of these social care activities, occupied the structural position now held by NGOs (Haustein, 2021, Tomalin, 2018).

Some missionaries exposed and opposed some of the activities of the colonisers (Bradbury, 2013). For example, in the first colonial period in 1511, Montesinos refused communion to those who were responsible for the ill treatment of the indigenous people. Bartholomé de las Casas, a Dominican friar, also condemned the Spanish treatment of indigenous people and confronted religious leaders who worked in consort with the colonial powers (Deneulin and Bano, 2009, Pearce 1992). These acts are regarded as the first examples of links between religion and social justice in colonial conditions.

We can see, therefore, that both of the socio-political projects of ‘development’ and ‘mission’ are intertwined historically with colonialism, to the extent that their current conditions are profoundly dependent on that history. This provides the context for those engaging in these projects today and for how they attempt to interpret the projects in which they are engaged, a topic which we will now address.

### **2.3 Discourses of Development and the History of the Idea of Development**

The development literature falls into two groups, those dealing with the theoretical aspects of development and those examining development practice. Kothari is concerned that the result of such a division is that "the ideological principles underlying these policies and practices are not fully scrutinised" (2005, p.6). To counteract this, Kothari (2005) believes that the disciplinary matrix that Burawoy (2004) devised for sociology can be applied to development studies. This matrix is a useful way “of identifying and appreciating the interconnectedness of the diverse range of activities and perspectives that come under its rubric" (Kothari, 2005, p.6).

In the view of Burawoy (2004) the disciplinary division of labour in sociology consists of public, policy, professional and critical sociologies. These four sociologies are interdependent. When thinking about knowledge within the discipline of sociology, Burawoy asks:

"Do we take the values and goals of our research for granted, handed down to us by some external (funding or policy) agency? Should we only concentrate on providing solutions to predefined problems, focusing on the means to achieve predetermined ends, on what Weber called technical rationality and what I call instrumental knowledge? In other words, should we repress the question of ends? Or should we be concerned explicitly with the goals for which our research may be mobilized, and with the values that underpin and guide our research? Going further afield, should sociologists be in the business of stimulating public discussions about the possible meanings of the "good society"? Like Weber, I believe that without value commitments there can be no sociology, no basis for the questions that guide our research programs. Without values social science is blind. We should try to be clear about those values by engaging in what Weber called value discussion, leading to what I will refer to as reflexive knowledge" (2004, p. 1606).

The questions Burawoy (2004) asks about the types of knowledge within sociology are relevant when discussing the forms of knowledge that exist within development and are pertinent to this review of the development literature. Where professional and critical sociologies (and by extension development studies) are focused on speaking to their own discipline, policy and public development studies speak to a broader audience beyond the discipline. However, professional and policy development studies speak with an instrumental perspective whereas critical and public development studies engage with a reflective perspective. The theoretical debates about the ideas and discourses of development also exhibit the same tensions between instrumental and reflexive knowledge. Instrumental knowledge within development focused on problem solving and "concerned with orientating means to given ends" (Kothari,2005, p.6)? Reflexive knowledge according to Kothari (2005, p.6) is a "dialogue about assumptions, values, premises among those in the discipline and with the public". However, before I delve into the different forms of knowledge and discuss the various theories and practices, I need to start by asking how development is understood through the varying discourses of development?

### **2.3.1 Discourses of Development**

Discourse, according to Hajer (1995), is the set of ideas, concepts and categories that confer meaning on a phenomenon. Hajer (1995) further argues that meaning is produced and reproduced through practices. Discourse includes practice and theory (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996), and is an interwoven set of languages and practices (Crush, 1995). Authors such as Grillo (1997) argue that discourse is what is represented through



language. One such representation is to see discourse analysis as a regime of knowledge and power (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996).

Discourse analysis in development serves many purposes. It is used to distinguish appropriate and legitimate ways of thinking, speaking and practising development (Grillo, 1997, p.). Development discourses can, on the one hand, be constructive and look for ways forward (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996). On the other hand, they can be destructive and seek to deconstruct the idea of development (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996; Pieterse, 2010).

Treating development as a discourse implies it is not simply theory or policy and there is more to development than ideology. Pieterse argues that “the methodological gain of discourse analysis is to add a level of reflexivity, theoretical refinement and sophistication to development studies, and thus to open up the politics of development to a more profound engagement” (2010, p.15). The limitations of discursive analysis in development are that it might not fully deal with issues of power and it may also divert attention away from the social relations on the ground (Pieterse, 2010). Discourse analysis in the development field has produced a number of different accounts and interpretations. Rist (1997) has used a historical approach to make the case that since the 1940s a development narrative has emerged which is, in fact, a myth.

### **2.3.2 History of the Idea of Development**

At the discourse-theory level a scholarly definition of development has been elusive (Viterna and Robertson, 2015). The term ‘development’ has become so diverse “that one sometimes wonders whether it now stands for anything more substantial than everyone’s own utopia” (Arndt (1987, p.165). Although the term ‘development’ is ambiguous, it is regarded by Pieterse, (2001, p.3) “as the organised intervention in collective affairs according to a standard of improvement”. Development implies “intentional social change in accordance with societal objectives” (Hettne, 2008, p.6). As it is currently conceived development dates back to the post-war era (Pieterse, 2010, Willis, 2005, Escobar, 1995). The meaning of development has changed over the years and this is illustrated in table 2.1 below. However, there are two distinct ways in which development is framed in mainstream development thinking. The two broad categories are, namely: economic development and human development. Essentially these frames represent

different normative and ethical approaches (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009) and (Goulet, 1997). These two perspectives differ in how they define what the ends and the means of development are. Human development is focused on reflexive knowledge concerned with values and individual well-being. This approach is regarded by authors such as Alkire and Deneulin (2009) and Goulet (1997) as, in essence, an ethical way of conceptualising development.

Table 2.1, below, has been adapted from the table produced by Pieterse (2010). I have adapted this table to include some of the key themes and events in history of Catholic teaching. The table highlights the different generational approaches to development. The period from the 1990s onwards, for example, has seen development thinking move away from grand narratives (Pieterse, 2001). This shift in thinking has resulted in new questions being asked, including what kind of development should be envisaged and what type of growth there should be ? Issues such as sustainable development, people-friendly growth, and pro-poor growth emerged (Pieterse, 2001). This time period highlighted the diversity and complexity of the development sector. Civil society and the NGOs have been at the forefront of propagating alternative discourses. Civil society actors are engaged in what Pieterse (2010, p 85) calls “development from below”.

**Table 2.1: Meanings of Development and Religion over Time**

Period	Perspectives	Meanings of Development
1800s	Classical political economy	Remedy for progress, catching up
1800s	Missions	Conversion
1870>	Latecomers	Industrialisation, catching up
1850>	Colonial economics	Resource management, trusteeship
1850s	Missions	Conversion and Civilising Process
1940>	Development economics	Economic growth - industrialisation
1950>	Modernisation theory	Growth, political and social modernisation
1960s	Vatican II	
1960>	Dependency theory	Accumulation - national autocratic
1970>	Alternative development	Human flourishing
1970s	Liberation Theology	
1980>	Human development	Capacitation - enlargement of people's choices
1980>	Neoliberalism	Economic growth, structural reform, deregulation, liberalisation, privatisation
1980>	Gender and Development	
1990>	Post-development	Authoritarian engineering, results deemed a disaster and repudiates economic growth
1990>	Post Colonialism	
2000s	Millennium Development Goals	Structural reforms
2010s	Sustainable Development Goals	

(See Table 1.1 Meanings of Development (Pieterse, 2010, p.7).

### 2.3.3 Economic Development and Its Critics

As can be seen from Table 2. 1, above, the economic approach dominates the generational debates about development. Ultimately, the goal of economic development is to increase income and economic growth. The main policy objective in the 1950s and 60s, and embraced by modernization theorists, was economic growth, which was measured in terms of gross national product (GNP). The belief at the time was that economic growth would lead to rising income levels and that this would foster development. The debate centred on strategies to achieve growth. In the 1970s the economic growth model was deemed a failure and alternatives to this model emerged. Authors drew attention to the experiences of the 1960's where "...even rapid economic growth does not necessarily

alleviate unemployment, inequality and poverty and may even make them worse” (Arndt, 1987:106).

The modernisation approach to development postulated that development occurred within the nation state and those countries on the periphery who are underdeveloped are just simply further down on the development ladder (Willis, 2005). This analytical frame was challenged in the 1960s and 70s first by dependency theories and then later by world systems theory. These theorists challenged the idea of development as occurring within the nation state rather they saw development and underdevelopment occurring through the interconnected world capitalist economy (Sklair, 1991). They further made the distinction between a single world economy as opposed to an international economy consisting of independent national economies (Wallerstein, 1976, Willis, 2005). Both the dependency theorists and world systems theorists traced the emergence of this world capitalist economy back to the fifteenth century and the colonial era.

The world capitalist system, according to dependency theorists, contains an inherent core-periphery duality, and it is the operation of the global capitalist system and this duality that keeps peripheral countries underdeveloped (Greig, Hulme, Turner, 2007; Sklair, 1991; Willis, 2005). The growth and development of core countries was as a result of the exploitation of the non-industrialised peripheral countries (Greig, Hulme, Turner, 2007; Willis, 2005) and Andre Gunder Frank deemed this process of exploitation to be the development of underdevelopment (Willis, 2005). These theorists contended that there was no genuine possibility of development while this system survived (Willis, 2005).

The structure of exploitation in the world capitalist system is its inbuilt mechanism of unequal exchange. In the colonial era it was simply the plunder of resources from peripheral countries. This evolved into unequal exchange embedded and operated either at the point of production or through international markets. This transfer of resources from the periphery to the core inhibited the ability of the periphery to accumulate capital (Greig, Hulme, Turner, 2007; Rist, 2008; Wallerstein, 1986; Willis, 2005).

Wallerstein’s world systems theory emerged to take account of the newly industrialising countries that emerged in the 1970s. His theory moved beyond what he considered the static dualism of the dependency models. Wallerstein saw the world capitalist economy as consisting of three regions: the core, semi-periphery and the periphery. He argued that

countries could move in and out of these categories (Wallerstein, 1986; Willis, 2005). Dependency theory and world systems theory were themselves criticised as being too economic and highly theoretical and somewhat divorced from the realities on the ground.

Neoliberalism emerged in the 1980s and placed a strong emphasis on growth alongside deregulation, liberalisation and privatisation. Neoliberalist ideas filtered their way into the policy frames of INGOs such as the IMF and World Bank. In 1989 the term 'Washington Consensus' was conceived by a British economist called Williamson (Marangos, (2009). The term "... was in principle geographically and historically specific, a lowest common denominator of the reforms that Williamson judged "Washington" could agree were required in Latin America at the time" (Marangos, 2009, p.197). However, the "Washington Consensus has been accepted as common wisdom on policies for development and growth and has been identified as a 'neoliberal manifesto'" (Marangos, 2009, p.197). Civil society under the 'Washington consensus' was encouraged to provide services in areas previously supplied by the state such as in health and education. Funds were made available to NGOs to assist in this service provision.

What became known as the 'Post-Washington Consensus', in the opinion of Fine (2001, p19), "endowed the IMF with the same or even more discretion to intervene through stabilisation and structural adjustment, albeit with the benefits of a more user-friendly rhetoric". The World Bank's "renewed commitment to poverty alleviation and its more favourable attitude towards the state and its less dogmatic rhetoric have endeared it to the donor community" (Fine 2001, p.2).

Notwithstanding the rise of alternative strategies and theories in the 1970s and 1980s, deterministic economic discourse continues to dominate the thinking in the development field, so much so that it has become accepted by many as a universal truth, (Escobar 1995; McMichael 1996; Tucker, 1997; Chambers 2008). However, these economic models of development have been criticised.

Many authors pointed to the failures of the economic model of development, and the growth model in particular. For Nussbaum (2003, p.33) growth "...is a bad indicator of life quality, because it fails to tell us how deprived people are doing". The 'Dethroners of GNP', as Arndt (1987) calls them, simply pointed to the experiences of the 1960's where "...even rapid economic growth, does not necessarily alleviate unemployment, inequality and poverty and may even make them worse" (Arndt, 1987, p.106). The neoliberalist

agenda of economic development created an ideology which imposed fundamentalist and destructive policies such as the structural adjustment programmes. The neo-liberalist 'Washington Consensus' propagated by the World Bank and the IMF came under severe criticism. These policies imposed hardship on developing countries, they failed to stimulate growth, increased poverty and worsened inequalities (Chambers, 2008; Harvey, 2005; Lewis, 2005; Marangos, 2009).

#### **2.3.4 Human Development and the Capabilities Approach**

The failures of the economic models led to the critical voices of post-development emerging. Instead of the idea of development being deconstructed the debate continues and the industry persists. The discipline continued to look for new discourses which focus on reflexive knowledge paying attention to values and seeking to stimulate discussion about the meaning of the good society (Burawoy, 2004). In the search for alternatives there was a switch in attention from "...how much is being produced to what is being produced, in what ways, for whom and with what impact" (Sklair, 1991, p.22). The human development approach as an alternative to the economic approach is considered a constructive discourse where ethics and values figure prominently. This approach illustrates the switch to the beneficiaries where people are seen as the ends of development.

The human development approach is an example of reflexive knowledge within the development discipline because at its heart is a discussion about values (Burawoy, 2004). It is considered an ethical approach because it "...raises issues of values, priorities and trade-offs so that people are better able to reflect profoundly on their circumstances and shape their respective societies" (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009, p.27). Denis Goulet, the pioneer of development ethics, believes ethical judgements on what constitutes the good life and the just society should form the basis of the decisions that development planners make. Therefore, development "...is above all else a question of values and human attitudes, self-defined goals and criteria for determining what are the tolerable costs to be borne in the course of change" (Goulet, 1997, p.1161). The human development approach emerged in the 1980s and is a perspective which "...does not intrinsically reject economic development; rather it subordinates economic development to being one of the means by which wider goals are to be reached" (Walby 2009, p.346).

This perspective is focused on individual well-being and is concerned with development from the standpoint of the poor (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2003). The 1990 human development report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines human development as: "A process of enlarging people's choices, to live a long and healthy life, to be educated and enjoy a decent standard of living. Additional choices include political freedom, guaranteed human rights and self-respect"(UNDP, 1990 p10). For Fukuda-Parr and Kumar (2009, p.xxxi) "...enriching people's lives cannot be left to markets. Similarly, state action is critical but not sufficient for accelerating human development - people's lives are too valuable to be left to markets and the state. Effective people's participation and inclusion in the processes of decision-making are needed for any intervention to be sustainable". There are two aspects to /human development, one is the capabilities i.e., health, knowledge and skills and secondly the use people make of these skills (UNDP, 1990).

Initially this approach was focused on a 'basic needs' strategy which, for Hoogvelt, (1982, p. 98) "...no longer justified the distribution of income and the minimisation of relative poverty as a means to an end (namely, national economic growth) but instead aimed at the eradication of absolute poverty as an end in itself. Instead of the national economy it places man and his needs at the centre of development". The basic needs approach focused on the consumption of commodities such as: health, education, clothing, shelter sanitation and hygiene (Gorman, 1984; Hoogvelt, 1982; Srinivasan 1977; Streeten and Burki ,1978). However, the approach has expanded over time. In order to keep human development on the agenda within the development discipline and to put people at the centre of development policy the economist Madhub al Hag created the Human Development Reports (Fukuda-Parr and Kumar, 2009). Over the years these reports have been responsible for keeping issues such as poverty on the development agenda and Alkire (2005) believes that the human development reports:

"Represent an extensive and sustained effort to translate some core ideas of the capability approach among other work into accessible language and operational policy prescriptions. In particular, they have continued to attend to human beings as the 'end' of development and have articulated some implications of that perspective through their analysis of a considerable range of topics" (Alkire, 2005, p.126).

The importance of the human development reports lies in the richness of the data contained within them (Sen, 2009, Nussbaum, 2011). Indeed, these reports have covered a wide range of topics and highlighted a range of dimensions of human development.

Alkire (2010) did a survey of the dimensions that have been included in the human development reports from 1990 to 2009. In all the years, health, education and living standards have been mentioned. Alkire (2010) argues that the human development reports do not contain a fixed list of dimensions but there is a range of possible dimensions, which include: Health and Life, Education, Decent Standard of Living, Political Freedom & Process Freedoms, Creativity and Productivity, Environment, Social & relational and Culture and Arts (Alkire, 2010, p.9).

The next stage in the advance of global indicators of human development was the UN Millennium development goals (MDGs) which were launched in 2000 and contained more goals than HDI (Walby, 2009). The MDGs have become the flagship of public policy in development circles (Lewis, 2005). The goals are as follows: (1) Eradicate extreme hunger and poverty, (2) Achieve universal primary education, (3) Promote gender equality and empower women, (4) Reduce child mortality, (5) Improve maternal health, (6) Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, (7) Ensure environmental sustainability, (8) Develop a global partnership for development ([http://www.mdgmonitor.org/browse\\_goal.cfm](http://www.mdgmonitor.org/browse_goal.cfm) Accessed January 2011). Robeyns (2009) maintains that the:

“UN millennium development goals can be understood as being a practical, albeit truncated, translation of the capability approach in practice. In fact, at the level of severe global poverty, any poverty–reduction strategy which conceptualises poverty in a capability sense is, for most accounts of justice, a concrete justice-enhancing strategy, since these theories would include the absence of severe poverty as a principle of justice” (2009, p.117).

These development goals have been superseded by the sustainable development goals which were devised by the United Nations in 2015. There are seventeen interlinked goals such as: no poverty, gender equality, clean water, quality education, good health and well-being, climate action, peace, justice and strong institutions. They are seen as a blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet and are expected to be achieved by 2030.

Other human development indices have been formulated such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), (Alkire, 2016). In 2008, The French President Nicolas Sarkozy set up a commission to identify the limits of GDP as an indicator of economic performance and social progress. They were set a task to produce a more relevant set of indicators of social progress (Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009). The report of this commission



concluded that "...there are eight dimensions which shape people's well-being and these are: Material living standards (income, consumption and wealth); Health; Education; Personal activities including work; Political voice and governance; Social connections and relationships; Environment (present and future conditions); Insecurity, of an economic as well as a physical nature" (Stiglitz, Sen, Fitoussi, 2009, p.15).

The human development approach is not simply concerned with indicators of social progress but also contains reflexive theoretical discourses which are driven by values and place people as the central focus of development. There had been calls for 'social development' to be taken seriously in the development debate going back to the late 1960s. Singer made a plea for a focus on the social objectives of development, such as health, education and nutrition. Writing in 1965 he stated his belief that: "Improvements in people's level of life can be achieved both directly ('social development') and indirectly via income and economic resources ('economic development'). Better health, better education, better nutrition are themselves the key to growth" (cited by Arndt, 1987, p.91). The first of these theoretical frames was the basic needs approach. This was followed by the capabilities approach which is seen as the main theoretical strand in human development.

The capabilities approach switched attention from the economic and placed human beings at the centre of development (Qizilbash, 1996; Clark, 2007), focusing on the quality of life of individuals. This approach is a flexible and multipurpose framework which focuses on peoples' well-being, that is what people are able to do and to be, the kind of life they are effectively able to lead (Robeyns, 2015, 2017). The uniqueness of the capabilities approach is that it "directs us to examine real lives in their material and social settings" (Nussbaum, 2000, p.71). The capabilities approach is used to evaluate policies on the basis of their impact on people's capabilities. This approach for Robeyns (2003, p.7) asks questions such as "whether people are being healthy, and whether they have the resources necessary for this capability, such as clean water, access to medical doctors, protections from infections and diseases and basic knowledge on health issues". It provides a basis with which to think about and evaluate human well-being, poverty and inequality. Nussbaum (2003) states that: "If we ask what people are actually able to do and to be, we come much closer to understanding the barriers societies have erected against full justice for women" (Nussbaum, 2003, p.33). Robeyns (2003) holds that:

"The capability approach to well-being and development thus evaluates policies according to their impact on people's capabilities. It asks whether people are being healthy, and whether the resources necessary for this capability, such as clean water, access to medical doctors, protection from infections and diseases, and basic knowledge on health issues, are present. It asks whether people are well nourished, and whether the conditions for this capability, such as sufficient food supplies and food entitlements, are met. It asks whether people have access to a high-quality education, to real political participation, to community activities which support them to cope with struggles in daily life and which foster real friendships, to religions that console them and which can give them peace of mind" (Robeyns, 2003, p.7).

Sen (1999) writes that development "...requires the removal of major sources of unfreedom: poverty as well as tyranny, poor economic opportunities as well as systematic social deprivation, neglect of public facilities as well as intolerance or over activity of repressive states" (Sen, 1999, p.3). Sen's argument is that development is a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. The lack of freedoms experienced by people encapsulates economic poverty and not having the freedom to satisfy hunger, or be able to access remedies for treatable illnesses or to have adequate clothing or shelter, or even clean water and proper sanitary facilities. Religion is seen by some as an adjunct to human development and I will now discuss how the relationship between religion and development has been discussed in the literature.

### **2.3.5 Religion and Development**

The literature on religion and development draws attention to the changing attitudes towards religion and religious actors of all faiths including Christian, Muslim and other religions in the development field. In the early days of development religion was viewed with suspicion and seen as counter-developmental (Clarke and Jennings, 2008). Over time policy-makers and practitioners began to look on religion more favourably and this led to growing links between development actors and religious actors. Academic researchers were drawn to investigate these growing links (Spies and Schrode, 2021; Tomalin, 2021), so much so that research on the religion-development nexus has taken off in the last fifteen years (Haustein, 2021, Smith, 2017, Spies and Schrode, 2021, Tomalin, 2018, 2021). Religion, therefore, "has made its way into the development mainstream" (Spies and Schrode, 2021, p.2) and inspired research which is both affirmative and critical of the religion-development nexus.

The history of this recent turn to research on the religion-development nexus contains distinct periods (Tomalin, 2021) and types of research (Spies and Schrode, 2021). The

first period included calls for religion to be taken seriously within development studies. Deneulin (2013), for example, argues that "it is difficult for anyone working or researching in the field of international development not to avoid confronting Christian beliefs and practices, not only given the numbers – an estimated 2.1 billion Christians worldwide – but also given their influence in social, economic and political life" (Deneulin, 2013, p.51). Authors such as Bradbury (2013) and Clark and Jennings (2008) made the normative case for a connection between development ideologies and human flourishing - well-being and Christian beliefs. In this view, religion provides a distinct adjunct to the human development perspective. And the Christian perspective on international development, with its focus on human dignity and human rights, is similar to the human development paradigm (Deneulin, 2013, p.11).

However, Deneulin (2013) believes there is a difference between the two approaches. Christians "...affirm that the human being finds ultimate fulfilment in God" (Deneulin, 2013, p.11). A Christian perspective, in the opinion of Deneulin (2013), gives rise to a different conception of development where the spiritual and material are inseparable and the goal is eternal life. Another feature of this perspective, according to Deneulin (2013), is the idea of the common good which comes about through the relationships of people with each other. The common good for Deneulin (2013) is achieved through subsidiarity, that is decisions and actions are taken at a local level. The common good "...is bound up with solidarity and responsibility for others" (Deneulin, 2013, p.13). The political dimension of Christianity is discussed by theorists such as Deneulin (2013) and Deneulin and Bano (2009). Deneulin reconciles these tensions by arguing that the role of Christianity is "revealing the face of God in economic, social and political structures" (2013, p.55).

The debate in the establishment phase of the religion-development nexus included a discussion on the importance of religious values and practices in shaping peoples' understanding of development (Spies and Schrode, 2021, Tomalin, 2021). Significantly, Spies and Schrode (2021) claim that the aim of this body of research was to "... satisfy the 'donors' needs for information about religious organizations and the benefits and challenges of integrating 'religion' into a field of practice that has been imagined as purely secular" (Spies and Schrode, 2021, p.3). The first period of research on the religion-development nexus, according to Tomalin (2021), covered a diverse range of topics but the aim was still to make the case for the relevance of religion to development.

In this sense, it echoed some of the instrumental literatures on secular development practice.

The second period of research shifted attention to critiquing and problematising religion and development (Tomalin, 2021). The critiques again drew attention to the malevolent role of religion and, in particular, the colonial legacies as discussed earlier in this chapter. Bandyopadhyay (2019) for example warns that the development-religion nexus can be used for the promotion of overtly fundamental religious beliefs. This is based on Bandyopadhyay's study of volunteer tourism in India using Mother Teresa's mission as a case study. Bandyopadhyay (2019) cites the late British writer Christopher Hitchens (1995) who vehemently criticized Mother Teresa believing her to be "less interested in helping the poor than in using them as an indefatigable source of wretchedness on which to fuel the expansion of her fundamentalist Roman Catholic beliefs". This quote also highlights what post-colonial theorists regard as the 'othering' which was at the heart of Mother Teresa's mission. Montero's (2012), study of Salesian missionaries, discusses how missionary narratives of the locals involved othering. Samson (2021) also reminds us that the context of colonialism cannot be ignored but that the historiography of religion and development is nuanced. Therefore, "making God talk can involve top down authority and colonising praxis but it can also inspire activism that even the most ardent post-colonial critic finds honourable" (Samson, 2021, p.8).

Some authors also raise the question about how dominant religious perspectives and voices are listened to in the development-religion nexus. Such an approach risks the marginalisation of other voices particularly feminist or gender perspectives and sensitivities (Tomalin, 2021). Khalaf-Elledge (2021) problematises the religion-gender and development nexus and argues that a better understanding of the religion-gender nexus is needed. Khalaf-Elledge (2021) argues that religious beliefs and practices play a key role in shaping gender roles within societies and these have inspired both patriarchal and emancipatory changes. Gender norms typically preserve traditional divisions of labour and maintain the status quo and can therefore be a barrier to women's development. In addition, patriarchal, gender norms are often packaged so that they become legitimised through religion and, consequently, unchangeable (Khalaf-Elledge, 2021). As a result, development practitioners need to engage critically and directly with the religion-gender nexus (Khalaf-Elledge, 2021).

Even though the research on the religion-development nexus has gone from the establishment phase through to a reflective and critique stage, Tomalin (2021) claims that much of the literature tends to believe there is a normative distinction between the secular and religion. The narrative that has been constructed, according to Spies and Schrode (2021, p.4), is one where the “... developers and the religions of the world share the same values and the same ideals of peace, charity and a better life, which makes their cooperation only natural. This interpretation suggests that religion in development discourse at times functions as a moral disguise for political goals of development”. In a desire to expand this narrative Tomalin (2021), along with Spies and Schrode (2021), believes that research in this area needs to take a new and constructive step in order to come to a fuller understanding of the religion-development nexus. This new constructive step adopts an interactionist approach to the religion-development nexus. Here the objective is to analyse religion and development as interrelated and contingent formations (Spies and Schrode, 2021).

Following on from the discussion on religion and development I will now examine specific Catholic, religious discourses which have had a significant bearing on the beliefs of Irish missionaries. These are: Catholic social teaching and liberation theology.

### **2.3.5a A Brief History of Catholic Religious Social Teaching**

Catholic social teaching is sometimes referred to as the best kept secret of the Catholic Church (Schultheis, 1988) which, along with key transformative moments in the Catholic Church’s history, has influenced the work and beliefs of missionaries. In his book ‘Option for the Poor and for the Earth: Catholic Social Teaching’ (2012) Donal Dorr gives an historical account of Catholic social teaching. It was when the Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical *Rerum Novarum* was published in 1891 that Catholic social teaching “acquired anything approaching a formal body of social thought” (Fahey, 1998, p.417). This encyclical focused on the harsh conditions that industrial workers faced. According to Dorr (2012), this document laid the foundation on which other social encyclicals could build. However, this document didn’t go as far as others in relation to the theme of social justice (Dorr, 2012).

The subject of development featured in papal encyclicals and one of the most important documents was Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (The Development of Peoples) which was published in 1967. This was the first time that an encyclical was devoted solely to the issue of development. In his encyclical Pope Paul VI "... spoke of a development which is, for each and all, the transition from less human conditions to those which are more human" (Dorr, 2012, p.158). Dorr (2012) maintains that this document represented a heuristic concept of development and that this was a fundamental change in thinking, because previous documents had taken the economic as the starting point. Dorr (2012) argues that this document moved away from a western-centred economic view of development to "the flourishing of every person, of all people, and of all peoples" (Dorr, 2012, p.159).

Pope Paul VI criticised basic liberal capitalism and the profit motive along with the unrestricted right to private property (Dorr, 2012; Schultheis, 1988). The document supported aid for developing countries and the Pope argued that it was imperative for rich people and advanced nations to help poor countries. Allied to this Pope Paul VI asked people to offer their skills to developing countries (Schultheis, 1988). The document also called on Christians to strive for international justice. Dorr (2012, pages 204- 206) draws attention to, and gives examples of, the divergence in thinking about development between the African and Latin American Churches. In Africa the church embraced the concept of development whereas in Latin America they placed the emphasis on liberation.

Dorr (2012) summarises and gives an assessment of Catholic social teaching. There are two phases to this teaching, the first which lasted until 1961 and the second which goes from 1961 to today. Up until the 1960s the ethos of Catholic social teaching was very conservative. It was hostile to any socialist ideas and gave religious legitimacy to the Western free enterprise model (Dorr, 2012). The Church in this period claimed to be concerned with the plight of the poor and provided an array of services needed by the poor. However, the ethos behind Catholic social teaching came to represent the opposite of what is considered to be the option for the poor today (Dorr, 2012). The church agreed that existing social ills needed to be remedied but did not go as far as challenging the societal and political structures, instead they focused on spelling out gospel principles (Bosch, 1991). The shift in thinking in the 1960s was significant. The papal encyclical

of 1961 came out in favour of the welfare state and was a move away from the right with regard to economic affairs (Dorr, 2012). This led to a change in the Catholic ethos where Catholics began to accept more state intervention in the economic and social aspects of societies (Dorr, 2012). The result, according to Dorr (2012, p. 444) was that “... the old monolithic Catholic ethos began to break up rapidly and was replaced by a new pluralism in Catholic thinking about social, economic and political affairs”.

The Second Vatican Council, which took place between 1962 and 1965, was a defining moment of change in the Catholic Church. This Council took place against the backdrop of a world that had seen significant changes from the first council in 1869 (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). In spite of enormous economic, political, scientific and technological advances many remained on the margins and were excluded from the benefits of these changes (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). How the Catholic Church had interpreted how to live and how to proclaim the Gospel had become outdated (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). At the time of Vatican II, the Catholic Church expected people to be passive and obedient even though they were educated and empowered. Women had a subordinate role to men (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). Important themes included in the documents of Vatican II included the acceptance of religious liberty and the dignity and freedom of the human person was as well as the freedom to follow one’s own conscience (Dorr, 2012). The Catholic Church adopted the principle that it would not impose its teachings on others (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). The final document also saw the need to respond to the ‘signs of the times’ such as poverty, growing inequality and social exclusion and to reflect on these in light of the gospel (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). It is this aspect of the document that had a profound influence on the formulation of Liberation theology. The encyclical encouraged all believers to engage with economic, social and political matters in order to bring about a more just social order (Deneulin and Bano, 2009).

### **2.3.5b Liberation Theology**

Prior to Vatican II, the Catholic Church in Latin America had strong links to the elite and, in some cases, they had alliances with the military, a throwback to the colonial era (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). Vatican II, therefore, marked a significant turning point for the Catholic Church and led to a wave of reflection and reform in the Latin American Church (Gelber, 1992). The Bishops’ Conference in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968 was seen as the culmination of these reflections. This conference examined every aspect of

Latin American society to identify the problems that existed. The conclusion of the conference was that the appropriate response to these problems was to interpret the ideas in the gospels as sources of liberation alongside development (Gelber, 1992). To this end the conference of bishops concluded that the church must adopt the principle of a preferential option for the poor (Dorr, 2012; Vallely, 2013).

Liberation theology, whose origins can be traced back to the Medellin reflections, certainly had a significant bearing on the beliefs and work practices of Latin American-based Catholic missionaries. Although liberation theology has waned in recent decades it has had a sort of comeback spurred on by Pope Francis (Thacker, 2015).

Liberation theology came about in response to the suffering that millions of people faced in their daily lives (Boff and Boff, 1987). At the time, massive poverty, economic dependence, widespread inequality and undemocratic rule were the principal features of Latin American societies (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). The suffering consisted of high rates of infant mortality, malnutrition, the lack of adequate housing, health problems, poor wages, job uncertainty, unemployment and underemployment, compulsory mass migrations (Boff & Boff, 1985). In responding to these issues Gutierrez (2015) argues that it is important not to leave matters such as poverty exclusively to the political realm. It is also wrong to simply believe that faith has little or nothing to say about these issues. Liberation theology, therefore, “was born when faith confronted the injustice done to the poor” (Boff and Boff, 1987, p.3). It challenged European theology which was focused on answering the question, how can the gospel speak to the modern middle-class and educated Christian? Instead, the Latin American Church “... must rather ask the question how can the gospel speak to the poor, a marginalised people considered as ‘nonpersons’ in the modern world (Gutierrez, 2015, p.45)? The ‘non person’ is somebody whose rights are not recognised and who counts for little within society or the Church (Gutierrez, 2015). “The principal interest of liberation theology is to generate activity on the part of the Church that will aid the poor efficaciously” (Boff & Boff, 1985, p.4).

Liberation theology is a way of thinking that is not confined to professional theologians (Boff and Boff, 1987) and the principal question it asks is, how to say to the poor, to the least of society, that God loves them (Gutierrez, 2015)? Another question is, what action



is needed for the oppressed to move out of their inhuman situation (Boff and Boff, 1987)? In considering the action that needs to be taken Liberation theologians argue that the Church should become more involved in politics. There is a need to go beyond aid and reformism and on to liberation (Boff and Boff, 1987). With aid people are objects of charity and not the subjects of their own liberation. Reformism seeks to improve the situation of the poor within existing social relationships. In liberation the oppressed come together and use the process of conscientisation to discover the causes of their oppression and then organise themselves into movements so as to act in a coordinated way (Boff and Boff, 1987).

In Latin America the majority are not only poor but Christians and, believing (Gutierrez (2015) and to be a true Christian, means making common cause with the poor and working out the gospel of liberation (Boff and Boff, 1987). Gutierrez (2015) sets out the demands made by adopting the preferential option of the poor and this requires us to “know seriously and responsibly the reality and the causes of poverty: not only does such an option lead us to make our pastoral action more effective and to deepen our theological reflection, it also ought to mark our spirituality -that is our following of Jesus Christ” (Gutierrez, 2015, p.30).

How does liberation theology work in practice? Liberation theologians “... have to be at times pastors, analysts, interpreters advocates, brothers and sisters in faith and fellow pilgrims. Above all else, they have to be vehicles of the spirit so as to be able to inspire and translate the demands of the gospel when confronted with the ‘signs of the times’ as they are emerging among the poorer classes of society in faithful reflection, hope and committed love” (Boff and Boff, 1987, p.20).

A key feature of liberation theology is that it is a theology of reflection, which consists of three phases or spheres, which are: Socio-analytical; Hermeneutical and a practical-pastoral reflection and application (Boff and Boff, 1987, Muller, 2015). In the socio-analytical phase liberation theologians start from the premise that an individual’s relationship with God cannot be separated from the societal and social conditions that that individual lives in (Muller, 2015). In order to reveal and comprehend this reality these theologians use the social sciences to engage in social analysis, in order to inform themselves about the actual conditions the oppressed live (Boff and Boff, 1987). The thinking tools that liberation theologians draw on to analyse and understand this reality

are Marxism and dependency theories of development. When liberation theologians are using a Marxian analysis, they are doing so from the standpoint of the poor. The question they ask of Marx is “what can you tell us about the situation of poverty and ways of overcoming it” (Boff and Boff, 1987, p.28). They are also very clear that they don’t want to have anything to do with the totalitarianism associated with communism and Stalinism (Muller, 2015). The net result of this social analysis is to see poverty as “the end product of a long process of plunder and social marginalisation” (Boff and Boff, 1987, p.27). For liberation theologians oppression is the result of dependence or subordination (Muller, 2015). These theologians are of the opinion that “one must go to the roots of the misery and initiate a global process of liberation from the current economic system” (Muller, 2015, p.68). The capitalist economic system is the source of oppression and exploitation. Liberation theologians propose an alternative socialist economic system whose goal is “the active participation of all people in the economies of their respective countries and the active participation of peripheral nations in the global economy” (Muller, 2015, p.69).

There has been a lot of criticism directed at this theological perspective for its use of Marxian analysis (Boff and Boff, 1987, McGovern, 2009). The concern of its critics is that this type of analysis oversimplifies the problems and that its supporters have succumbed to false ideologies and distorted the teachings of Jesus Christ. There is a belief amongst the critics that using this type of analysis “will lead to an espousal of Marxist -Leninist strategies of violent class struggle and ultimately to Marxist dominated governments” (McGovern, p.xi).

The second phase in the process consists of hermeneutical reflection which asks the question: what has the word of God to say about the real situations which the socio-analytical phase has revealed (Boff and Boff, 1987)? Liberation theologians then use the scriptures to assist them in interpreting their socio-analytic analysis (\*Boff and Boff, 1987, Muller, 2015). The difference between liberation theology and other theologies is that these theologians examine the scriptures from the standpoint of the poor and oppressed. This reading of the scriptures, according to Boff and Boff (1987), is a theological-political reading of the Bible which “...stresses the social context of the message. It places each text in its historical context in order to construct an appropriate – not literal – translation into our own historical context” (Boff and Boff, 1987, p.34).

In his approach to liberation theology Gutierrez reflects on the concept of liberation and introduces another concept, structural sin (Deneulin, 2013, Muller, 2015). Poverty and injustice are the result of structural sin (Deneulin, 2013). Sin is "... evident in oppressive structures, in the exploitation of humans by humans, in the domination of people's races and social classes. Sin appears, therefore, as the fundamental alienation, the root of the situation of injustice and exploitation" (Gutierrez, 1971, p.174, cited by Deneulin, 2013).

The third phase is pastoral-practical reflection. This is the convergence of the previous two phases (Muller, 2015). Liberation theology is a theology which, in the view of Boff and Boff (1987), leads to practical results and these include working for justice, love, conversion and the renewal of the Church. Conversion for these theologians is making explicit the values which underpin their work (Holland and Henriot, 1986). Pastoral action is complex and necessitates defining one's tactics and strategies, and the non-violent methods that will be used. These methods include dialogue, persuasion, moral pressure and passive resistance (Boff and Boff, 1987). Muller (2015) gives a good summary of what is involved in pastoral action, when he states that this action:

"Includes the celebration in the liturgy and the sacraments of the existence of human freedom as well as the growing consciousness of the social-historical conditions of oppression and enslavement. Also, there is the challenge of preaching, catechesis and forms of education as well as public protest against oppression. Through this involvement, there is solidarity with poor people and with their personal development, so that these people take their destiny in their own hands, shaping their own lives and freeing themselves from social compulsions" (Muller, 2015, p.75).

As noted above liberation theology uses a Marxian analysis and it also draws on the dependency theory of development. However, another reading of this theology would indicate that it is a perspective that has a lot in common with post-colonial theories. This theology is concerned with listening to, and giving a voice to, the subalterns in society. Indeed, the theologians who formulated it come from Latin America. It is a perspective that sets itself apart from European theology and traces the historical roots of oppression and poverty.

### **2.3.6 Deconstructing Development**

As mentioned above the period from the 1990s on saw a questioning of the very idea of development. Theorists started to deconstruct the idea of development and two distinct critiques emerged, post-development and post-colonialism. Both draw attention to the

failures of development, however, post-colonialism focuses on the historical roots of development in colonial times which instituted regimes of injustice and inequality linked to the Eurocentric capitalist system. The colonial era introduced a way of framing and differentiating between the supposedly superior Europe and the rest. I will now outline the main ideas in each of these critical accounts.

### 2.3.6a Post-Development

There is another school of thought which calls into question the very idea of development. Here, development is often regarded as a failed model. This perspective is put forward by the post-development theorists. It can be argued that theorists in the post development tradition can be classified according to Burawoy's (2004) matrix as being in the critical space within the discipline. Their approach is reflexive knowledge about the assumptions and premises of development and seeks to deconstruct the idea of development (Apthorpe and Gasper, 1996, Pieterse, 2010). The post-development theorists regard development as a failed model and a redundant concept. A common aim of the post-development theorists for Rist (2008, p.257) is to “break free from a concept and a set of practices that they consider dangerously misguided”.

The deconstruction of the idea of development came about after much soul searching among academics and theorists. Post-development came to the fore because the 1980s was regarded by many as the ‘lost decade’ in development. The debt crisis and the structural adjustment programmes had a detrimental effect on people’s lives right across the board and most particularly in Africa. These theorists regard development as a failed model and a redundant concept. A common aim of the post-development theorists, according to Rist (2008, p.257) is to “break free from a concept and a set of practices that they consider dangerously misguided”. Sachs (1992) goes further and states that the idea of development stands:

"Like a ruin in the intellectual landscape. Delusion and disappointment, failures and crimes have been the steady companions of development and they tell a common story, it did not work. Moreover, the historical conditions which catapulted the idea into prominence have vanished: development has become outdated. But above all, the hopes and desires which made the idea fly, are now exhausted: development has grown obsolete" (Sachs 1992, p.1).

These theorists, amongst others, highlighted the technical nature of the development field. Escobar (1995, p.23) argued that: “Poor people came under the gaze of experts and were mere objects of knowledge and management and this allowed for a whole array of

interventions to be put in place, in the areas for example of health, education, hygiene, morality”. In the view of Escobar this has allowed for the removal of “problems from the political and cultural realms and to recast them in terms of the apparently neutral realm of science” (Escobar, 1995, p.45). Development, according to Tucker (1997a, p.11), is: “The imposition of externally constructed meaning and values on a diversity of peoples and locations. Development poses a form of globalised knowledge claiming universal validity over submerged and marginalised forms of local knowledge”. Nonetheless, development workers use discourses of development to guide their actions, even if they do so in ways, they do not fully articulate even to themselves.

### **2.3.6b Gender and Development**

The women in development approach first emerged in the 1970s, motivated primarily by the marginalisation of women in development and studies of development processes. This instrumentalist approach argued that women were not benefiting from the trickle-down policies and needed to be included in development programmes (Khalaf-Elledge, 2021; Jackson and Pearson, 1998). The women in development approach however, was criticised for failing to promote gender equality, even as gender became mainstreamed in development (Khalaf-Elledge, 2021). Gender appears as “neutralised of political intent. Diluted, denatured, depoliticised, included everywhere as an afterthought, “gender” has become something everyone knows that they are supposed to do something about” (Cornwall, Harrison, and Whitehead, 2004, p.4). The political project of gender and development had become a technical fix (Cornwall, Harrison, and Whitehead, 2004).

The critiques and the limitations of the women in development approach led to a new perspective called gender and development emerging in 1995. At the time there was a growing feminist analysis of the patriarchal nature of the state and the ways in which the interests of women were ignored (Jackson and Pearson 1998). An alternative was needed where the approach was structured and informed by a gendered analysis of social relations (Jackson and Pearson, 1998).

The gender and development approach sought to extend the analytical frame of the women in development approach (Cornwall, Harrison, and Whitehead, 2004). It drew attention to how gender is framed and represented in development and set out to focus on the socially constructed basis of gender roles and the structural inequalities of gender relations (Khalaf-Elledge, 2021). This approach problematised gender relations and how

women are subordinated in the context of development. What the analysis points to is a need not only for a proper concentration of resources on women's development but also that gender issues and a gender analysis are both included in policy formulation at all levels (Khalaf-Elledge, 2021). In spite of these efforts Khalaf-Elledge (2021) believes gender initiatives in development continue to focus on women in isolation and offer materialistic solutions to their subordinated roles.

### **2.3.6c Post-Colonialism**

Post-colonial analysis draws attention to the fact that colonialism was a system of rigid structures and profound inequality (Young, 2020). Authors who adopt this approach argue that colonialism and development shouldn't be thought of as separate and distinct periods of history. Rather, they argue that the idea of development needs to be traced back to colonial times and that the processes and practices instituted back then are still in operation today (Kothari, 2005; Kenny, 2008). For post-colonial theorists the colonial encounter is not just in geographic regions it also takes place in the economic, social, cultural and linguistic spheres. The colonial power structures and Eurocentric logics continue to be reproduced, the implications of which are still being felt today (Kenny, 2008, Sultana, 2019). These power structures, according to Sultana (2019), are "now in the hands of development organisations such as the IMF and World Bank - controlled by former colonizers or current imperial states - who determine the fate of billions in the global south" (Sultana, 2019, p.32). The result is the formulation of hegemonic ideas and practices of development. For post-colonialists this western construct and Eurocentric form of knowledge needs to be challenged (Simon, 2006). Thus, the goal of post-colonial theories is to seek to disrupt northern thinking about the world and development (Willis, 2005).

The post-colonial perspective draws attention to the impact of European imperialism, where the development of Europe is linked to the underdevelopment of Africa and Latin America (McEwan, 2019). Colonialism produced an economic imbalance which was needed for the growth of European capitalism (Loomba, 2005). In mainstream development discourses "the historical theft and exploitation that built the West at the expense of the rest are frequently over-looked or ignored in dominant development thinking and practices, so decolonizing development requires recognizing, understanding,

and addressing these historical silences and violences” (Sultana, 2019, p.32). Colonialism instituted complex global relations and power dynamics between the colonised and their colonial masters which permitted the flow of human and natural resources. These complex relationships were the forerunner to modern day globalisation (Loomba, 2005; McEwan, 2019).

Sultana (2019, p.32) summarises how the colonial policies and practices are inherent in the development project where it is argued by scholars that:

“Development is a creative adjustment of coloniality, whereby the colonialist logics and imperatives still remain socially, politically, economically, and co-logically. Extractions of resources, restructuring of nation-states and economies, consolidations of power in the hands of a few global elites, and the practices of surveillance, conformities, and alienations continue. Such processes happen despite feel-good discourses such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”.

Post-colonial theorists draw attention to the cultural logics such as discourses, cultural schemas, representations and ideologies attendant with colonialism (Go, 2013). Stemming from colonial times a differentiation has been made between the West and the global south or, as Said (2002) puts it, between the West and the ‘Orient’ or the other (Rapley, 2007). How each side knows themselves and differentiates themselves from each other is particularly important, according to Said (2012), because the West is assumed to be superior and the peoples of the East as backward and ‘uncivilised’. Colonial societies were regarded as childlike and “therefore required either protection or tutelage before they assumed their place at the civilised table of sovereign nation states” (Greig, Hulme, Turner, 2007, p.60). This framing of the superiority of the West versus the Global south still operates today and has been used to justify various forms of intervention (Said, 2002; Willis, 2005).

For post-colonial theorists this framing has resulted in the silencing of ‘subaltern’ voices. ‘Subaltern’ groups are those in society that are marginalised, excluded and disempowered (McEwan, 2019; Young, 2020). Post-colonial studies provide a space for ‘subaltern’ voices to speak rather than be spoken for (McEwan, 2019). Post-colonial approaches are regarded by McEwan (2019, p.328) as “part of broader progressive epistemologies and methodologies that seek to valorise and mobilise politically around cultures, identities, rights, knowledge and worldviews of marginalised or subaltern groups”. Some examples of these epistemologies are anti-globalisation agendas and empowerment-oriented

participatory approaches to development (McEwan, 2019). Post-colonial approaches to development stress the importance of understanding the local and the need for subaltern knowledge to be taken seriously (Loomba, 2005; Simon, 2006; Young, 2020). Taking this subaltern knowledge seriously means a conceptual reorientation towards perspectives developed outside the west (Young, 2020). Post-colonialism, therefore, amplifies the presence of insurgent knowledges that comes from the peripheries, from the indigenous, the marginalised and the dispossessed (Young, 2020). Thus, decolonising development means “disrupting the deeply rooted hierarchies’ asymmetric power structures, the universalisation of western knowledge, the privileging of whiteness and the taken for granted Othering of the majority of the world” (Sultana, 2019, p.34).

Post-colonial approaches can employ tactics where alternative knowledge or voices of resistance are heard. One example is “to focus on the textual production from the south. This includes autobiography and testimonials by people marginalised by impoverishment. These provide a rich site for post-colonial analysis because they demonstrate the ways in which individual lives are affected by a global system of capital” (McEwan, 2019, p.341).

Andreotti (2006), and McEwan (2019) are of the view that a new, post-colonial pedagogy of development is required to disrupt the universalisation of Western development thinking. The post-colonial model of development education McEwan (2019) proposes is a comparative solidarity-based model where the local and the global exist simultaneously and constitute each other. This type of comparative course would “demonstrate the interconnectedness between histories, experiences and struggles in diverse parts of the world, the story of development in the North being historically shaped by its relationship with the South through imperialism, slavery and now by globalisation” (McEwan 2019,364). This type of course would allow for the foregrounding of issues of domination, agency and resistance. Such pedagogies, according to McEwan (2019, p.364), can:

Thus, theorise experience, agency and justice through a more cross-cultural lens rather than a Eurocentric or culturally pluralist one. In practice, a post-colonial educational framework aims to avoid a model based on compassion and seamless development. Instead, it outlines an approach that attempts to go beyond Eurocentrism, essentialism, reversed racism and orientalism.

McEwan (2019) compares and contrasts the comparative model and the seamless development model of development education. The compassion and seamless approach



to development defines the problem as poverty, helplessness and the lack of development, resources, skills and technology. This model is based on caring, sharing and having a responsibility for the other, or to teach the other. The grounds for acting are humanitarian and moral which is based on normative principles. Structures, institutions and individuals that are a barrier to development need to change. The principle of change is universalism, a non-negotiable vision of how everyone should live. The goal of global citizenship is to empower individuals to act or become active citizens based on what has been defined for the as a good life or ideal world. The problem with this approach, according to McEwan (2019), is there can be a feeling of self-importance or self-righteousness and cultural supremacy. It reinforces colonial assumptions and relations (See McEwan, 2019 pps 365-366).

A post-colonial approach, on the other hand, frames the problem as based on inequality and injustice. There are structures, systems and power relations that maintain exploitation. Justice and responsibility towards the other and to learn with the other form the basis for caring in this model. The grounds for acting are political and ethical. In this approach structures, institutions, cultures and belief systems need to change. The basic principle for change is reflexivity and dialogue. The goal of global citizenship is to empower individuals to reflect critically on the legacies and processes of their cultures and contexts. People are therefore tasked with imagining different futures and encouraged to take responsibility for their decisions and actions (See, McEwan, 2019 pps 365 -366).

Andreotti (2006) sees a post-colonial development education course as providing triggers for critical engagement with perspectives and practices currently in vogue in development education. This type of course asks students to engage in reflexivity and to have a critical, ethical engagement with the assumptions that are hidden behind different perspectives. Post-colonialism “does not give recipes, but it provides directions that point to a move beyond ethnocentrism and its claims of cultural supremacy” (Andreotti, 2006, p. ??).

The post-colonial approach to development, as outlined above, differs from the post-development approach in that it offers new ways of thinking about development rather than dismissing it as a failed model. The post-colonial approach draws attention to the need to address the problem in terms of inequalities and injustices. Post-colonialism

brings to the fore the notion that the ideas, processes and practices of development have their roots in colonial times. One example is how the development of the south is determined by its dependent relationship with the North. Another is how the world is framed as the superior West versus the inferior, backward and ‘uncivilised’ Global South. This framing has been used to justify various forms of intervention. The superiority of the West is firmly established in the Eurocentric development knowledge used in the field. The post-colonial conception of development believes that subaltern voices need to be listened to because historically these voices and their knowledge have been subordinated and silenced. Therefore, post-colonialism is about inserting its alternative knowledge into the power structures of the West. Furthermore, as McEwan (2019, p.230) remarks, “... you need to stop looking at the world from above and start to experience it from below, from those who live on the fringes not the centre”. A post-colonial approach to development brings with it a critical and reflexive analysis. This type of framework will assist in the analysis of the development discourses of Irish development workers and missionaries which will be set out in Chapter Four, below.

## **2.4 Making Sense of Diverse Development Discourses: Ingrid Robeyns’ (2017) Modular View of the Capabilities Approach**

For Robeyns (2016; 2017) the capability approach is a family of theories and accounts, which share a number of features, and are presented in her 2017 modular view of the capabilities approach. Robeyns (2017, p. 36) believes her modular view allows us “to appreciate the diversity within the capability approach more fully”. The modular view “shifts the focus a little bit from the question of how to understand the capability approach in general, to the question of how the various capability accounts, applications and theories should be understood and how they should be constructed” (Robeyns, 2017, p.36). Before I outline her model in detail, I will give an overview of some of the components that are included within a human development frame. I will also outline how human development is measured.

### **2.4.1 Components and Measures of Human Development**

Sen’s capability approach is focused on quality of life (Nussbaum, 2007, 2011) and, in order to evaluate quality of life there needs to be an assessment of the capability to function (Sen, 2009). The comparative measurement of Sen’s framework is centred

around evaluating social change in terms of the richness of human life (Sen, 2009). Nussbaum (2000) claims that, for Sen, questions about social equality and inequality are best raised within the space of capabilities. Under Sen's (2009) capability approach human life is a set of 'doings and beings', in other words 'functionings'. It is Robeyns view (2003, p.2) that Sen's functionings:

"Include working, resting, being literate, being healthy, being part of a community, being respected, and so forth. The distinction between achieved functionings and capabilities is between the realised and the effectively possible, in other words, between achievements and freedoms. What is ultimately important is that people have the freedoms (capabilities) to lead the kind of lives they want to lead, to do what they want to do and be the person they want to be. Once they effectively have these freedoms, they can choose to act on those freedoms in line with their own ideas of the kind of life they want to live" (Robeyns, 2003, p.2).

According to Robeyns (2003) Sen refuses to endorse a specific list of capabilities. Instead, he "...thinks some capabilities (for example health and education) have a particular centrality" (Nussbaum, 2011, p.20). Robeyns (2003) believes Sen:

"...doesn't want to endorse a specific list of functionings for two reasons. On the one hand he wants to advance the capability approach as a general approach to the evaluation of individual advantage and social arrangements, and not as a well-defined theory. On the other hand, Sen stresses the role of agency, the process of choice and the freedom to reason in the selection of relevant capabilities. He argues that we must leave it to the democratic processes and social choice procedures to define the distributive policies. In other words, when the capability approach is used for policy work, it is the people who will be affected by the policies who should decide on what will count as valuable capabilities in this policy question. This immediately makes clear that, in order to be operational for (small-scale) policy implementation, the capability approach needs to engage with theories of deliberative democracy and public deliberation and participation" (Robeyns, 2003, p. 36).

Sen's approach has been criticised for being too individualistic. Evans (2002), for example, argues that Sen's focus on individuals neglects the important role of collective capabilities in expanding what people have reason to value. Evans (2002) maintains that: "In practice, my ability to choose the life I have reason to value often hangs on the possibility of my acting together with others who have reason to value similar things. Individual capabilities depend on collective capabilities" (Evans, 2002, p.55).

Evans (2002) holds that Sen "...refrains from exploring the ways in which the concentration of economic power over the means of producing and diffusing culture might compromise my capability to decide what things I have reason to value" (Evans, 2002, p.57). What is missing from Sen's framework, according to Evans (2002, p.57),

“...is an analysis of the extent to which modern market processes might constitute an impediment to the kind of deliberative preference formation that is essential to the expansion of capabilities”.

Deneulin (2008), on the other hand, believes that the thoughts and actions of people are not separated from the society in they live, according to Sen’s capability approach. For Deneulin (2008) this leads Sen “... to introduce the notion of socially dependent individual capabilities” (Deneulin, 2008, p.106). In the opinion of Deneulin (2008) Sen asserts that:

“The freedom and agency that each individual enjoys are inescapably qualified and constrained by the social, political and economic opportunities that are available to us. Individual freedoms are inescapably linked to the existence of social arrangements, and our opportunities and prospects depend crucially on what institutions exist and how they function” (Deneulin, 2008, p.107).

Nussbaum’s capabilities approach differs from Sen’s work in that her approach lists the core entitlements required as a minimum to respect human dignity. These have a philosophical underpinning and must be respected and implemented by governments (Nussbaum, 2007). The role of Government and public policy is to improve the quality of life for all people as defined by their capabilities (Nussbaum, 2011). Robeyns (2003) states that Nussbaum’s aim is to:

“Develop a partial theory of justice, by arguing for the political principles that should underlie a constitution. Thus, Nussbaum enters the capability approach from a perspective of moral-legal-political philosophy with the specific aim to argue for political principles that a government should guarantee all its citizens through its constitution” (Robeyns, 2003, p.24).

A central aspect of the capabilities approach, in the opinion of Nussbaum (2011), is that it is “...concerned with entrenched social injustice and inequality, especially capability failures that are the result of discrimination or marginalisation” (Nussbaum, 2011, p.19).

Unlike Sen, Nussbaum gives a definitive list comprising ten central capabilities and these are: (1) Life, to be able to live to the end of a normal life; (2) Bodily health, being able to have good health; (3) Bodily integrity, to be able to move freely from place to place, to be secure from violent assault; (4) Senses, imagination and thought, being able to use the senses, to imagine, think and reason in a truly human way; (5) Emotions, being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; (6) Practical reason, being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one’s life; (7) Affiliation, being able to live with and towards others; to recognise and

show concern for other human beings; (8) Other species, being able to live with concern for and relation to animals and plants; (9) Play, being able to laugh and play and enjoy recreational activities; (10) Control over one's environment (A) politically, being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life, having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association (B) material, being able to hold property and have property rights on an equal basis with others, having the right to seek employment and, when in work, being able to work as a human being, exercising practical reason (Nussbaum, 2006, p.76-77; 2011, p.34-35).

Nussbaum's list has been the subject of some criticism and has even been deemed unworkable by some. Clark (2005) criticises Sen and Nussbaum's perspectives on human development as being only theoretical and untested in the everyday world of development. The literature also addresses the issue of paternalism in the capabilities approach (Deneulin, 2002; Nussbaum, 2000; Robeyns, 2017). Paternalism is when a set of norms is used as a benchmark, telling people what is good for them. In so doing, little respect is shown for a person's freedom (Nussbaum, 2000, p.51). Some authors believe that a manifestation of paternalism is unavoidable. Robeyns (2017) argues that a focus on capabilities over functionings is anti-paternalistic because "...we do not force people into a particular account of good lives, but instead aim at a range of possible ways of life from which each person can choose" (Robeyns, 2017, p.107).

Robeyns maintains that there are many modes of capability analysis (2017). The capability approach has been used for quality of life measurement drawing on social indicators. In the qualitative realm, the analysis has drawn on thick descriptive elements of a narrative, describing in detail the lives of people in certain contexts. The approach has also been used as a conceptual analysis. Here it is used as part of the conceptualisation of an idea. The capability approach "...provides a better understanding of a certain phenomenon" (Robeyns, 2017, p.32). She gives the example of education and asks, what are the different ways it can be conceptualised? Is it seen as a legal right, or as the expansion of a capability?

As can be seen from the discussion above there are many components to a capability analysis and, moreover, it is "...a normative framework which includes a family of theories. It has been used to conceptualize, measure, and assess the distribution of well-being in a population and has contributed to the normative basis for assessing the change

or design of institutions, policies, and practices” (Robeyns, 2016, p.403). Examples of the components that fall under the capability approach pertinent to this thesis are the following: Participation, politics and rights, empowerment and capacity building and religion.

#### 2.4.1a The Capabilities Approach and Participation

The development literature highlights the commonality between participation and the capabilities approach (Alkire, 2002, 2005; Frediani, 2015). The central ideas of participation are similar to the values which underpin Sen’s concept of freedom (Frediani, 2015) and these focus on the choice and opportunity of people to pursue their goals. Participation contributes to personal development and well-being (Alkire, 2002; Frediani, 2015). Participation entered into the lexicon of development buzzwords in the 1980s (Frediani, 2015, Leal, 2010). The original aim behind participatory approaches was “...to make people central to development by encouraging beneficiary involvement in interventions that affect them and over which they previously had limited control or influence” (Cooke and Kothari, 2001, p.5). According to Deneulin (2009) the idea on which participation is based is the ability of individuals to be agents in their own lives. Frediani (2015) argues that there is an apolitical, pragmatic version of participation, which states that:

“Better involvement of beneficiaries’ in development projects and initiatives would lead to responsive solutions, addressing people’s diverse needs and aspirations. Others have used cost-benefit analysis to argue that participation is operational as a mechanism to reduce the expenditure of programmes by engaging local communities in the implementation and maintenance of interventions. Such perspective follows by arguing that a sense of ownership over interventions would logically motivate the continued maintenance and cultivation of project outputs” (Frediani, 2015, p.5).

A criticism levelled at participatory approaches by Cooke and Kothari (2001) is that the focus on empowerment hides the underlying desire for managerial effectiveness. Participation is sometimes used merely as a tool for achieving pre-set objectives.

As noted above agency is one of the non-core elements in Robeyns’ 2017 frame. The focus on agency within the context of participation and the capabilities approach is concerned with people and groups being free to make decisions about things that affect their lives (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009; Frediani, 2015). People cannot be seen just as

beneficiaries, but rather as human beings who decide upon and realise their goals (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009). Both participation and the capabilities approach focus on the issue of who decides and what is decided. The deliberative process may not identify the best choice, but the process is able to distinguish the better from the worse (Frediani, 2015). Participation, "...from the human development perspective, is both a means and an end. So, active participation, which allows people to realize their full potential and make their best contribution to society, is also an end in itself" (UNDP, 1993, p.21). Frediani (2015) argues that the capability approach and participatory methods are complementary. Participatory capabilities, according to Frediani (2015), are the freedoms or opportunities of individuals or groups to achieve participatory goals.

#### 2.4.1b Human Development, Politics and Rights

Politics is not merely an adjunct to human development but a fundamental dimension of the capability approach (Deneulin, 2009b; Nussbaum, 2000, 2011; Sen, 1999). Nussbaum (2000) believes that her list of central capabilities comprises political principles which can be embodied in constitutional guarantees. Nussbaum (2011, p.90) also holds that a political view must take a moral stand, "...basing political principles on some definite values, such as impartiality and equal respect for human dignity". The link between politics and the capability approach can be seen in Robeyns' (2017) discussion on structural constraints which, for her, include the institutions, policies, laws and social norms that people face. These constraints can have "...a great influence on their conversion factors, and hence on their capability sets" (Robeyns, 2017, p.65). Structural constraints, according to Robeyns (2017), exist when groups in society are stigmatized for cultural, historical and religious reasons. Here people are regarded as outcasts and treated with disrespect. In this case the capabilities or opportunities for friendships or for a healthy sense of self-confidence are diminished (Robeyns, 2017). Politics at the national level is important because of the structural constraints which they may generate. Sen (1999, p.30) believes "...the strongest argument in favour of political freedom lies precisely in the opportunity it gives citizens to discuss and debate – and to participate in the selection of values and the choice of priorities".

Political participation is seen as a core component of human development and the capability approach. Sen (1999, p.18) argues that "...greater freedom enhances the ability of people to help themselves and also to influence the world". According to Deneulin

(2009b) this ability is achieved through political participation and democratic decision-making. Nussbaum (2003, p.80) argues that people need to be able to have control over their political environment and this means "...being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life, having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association". Democracy for Sen (1999) is not just about voting and respect for elections, it is also about respecting people's liberties and freedoms. The UNDP, according to Deneulin (2009b), defines democracy as values and principles that permit poor people to gain power through participation. At the same time the poor must be protected from unaccountable actions by governments and other forces. Within human development and the capabilities approaches, democracy and political participation are values in themselves, because "...exercising civil and political rights is a crucial part of good lives of individuals as social beings" (Deneulin, 2009b, p.191). Democracy also provides a way for people to raise their concerns in a public space. Furthermore, democracy contributes to the collective construction of common values around which society is organised (Deneulin, 2009b, Frediani, 2015)

The human rights' approach "...enhances human development with its stronger focus on obligations and duties" (Deneulin, 2009, p.60). Nussbaum (2011) sees a close link between rights and the capability approach and believes the capabilities on her list "...overlap substantially with the human rights in the Universal Declaration and other human rights instruments" (Nussbaum, 2011, p.62). Polly Vizzard defines a human right as a "...claim to fundamental benefit that should be enjoyed universally by all people everywhere on the basis of equality and non-discrimination", (cited by Deneulin, 2009, p.60). The UNDP human development report of 2000 states: "Human rights and human development share a common vision and a common purpose – to secure the freedom and well-being and dignity of all people everywhere" (UNDP, 2000, p1). Stewart (1989) sees a connection between basic needs and human rights (1989, p.358) arguing that "...making basic needs into human rights adds two elements to the basic needs' approach. It increases the moral weight of, and political commitment to, their fulfilment, and it gives basic needs' fulfilment some international legal status".



#### 2.4.1c The Capabilities Approach, Empowerment and Capacity Building

Like participation, empowerment resonates with the ideas of opportunity and choice as set out in the capabilities approach. The concept has gained significant traction in mainstream development thought. In the 1970s and 1980s empowerment was seen as a radical project to “...enable otherwise excluded social groups to mobilize collectively to define and claim their rights” (Cornwall and Brock, 2010, p.6). It had both individual and collective dimensions (Cornwall and Brock, 2010). In this period the term was seen as a break from the top-down paternalistic approach of community development (Batliwala, 2010). In the 1990s, Batliwala argues (2010), the term was hijacked and converted from a collective to an individualistic process. Cornwall and Brock (2010) argue that concepts such as empowerment still have a role to play and to give up on it because it has been mainstreamed would be to discard a concept that has remained critical for decades, “...in animating struggles for equality, rights and social justice” (Cornwall and Brock, 2010, p.18). There are many definitions of empowerment according to Ibrahim and Alkire (2007). Empowerment is defined as enabling people to have a voice and to make choices (Cornwall and Brock, 2005, Kabeer, 1999). Fundamentally, empowerment is about the freedom to make decisions in matters that affect one’s life (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009).

Empowerment is also linked with agency which is a module in Robeyns’ 2017 frame. The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative believes agency is the ability to advance goals that one values and has reason to value, and empowerment is the catalyst for its expansion – in other words, the increasing ability of individuals and of groups to bring about change”.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Trommlerova et al define empowerment “...as an increase in agency which enables individuals to pursue valuable and important goals. Both agency and empowerment are intrinsically valuable and can be instrumentally effective in promoting human development and reducing poverty” (Trommlerova et al, 2015). Kabeer notes that there is a logical relationship between poverty and disempowerment, because an insufficiency of the means for meeting one’s basic needs often rules out the ability to exercise meaningful choice” (Kabeer, 1999, p 437). As far as empowerment is concerned, “... we are interested in inequalities in people’s capacity to make choices rather than in differences in choices they make” (Kabeer, 1999, p 439).

---

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.ophi.org.uk/research/missing-dimensions/empowerment/>, date accessed October 2021

#### 2.4.2 Ingrid Robeyns (2017) Modular View of the Capabilities Approach

The core components in Robeyns' (2017) modular framework are: first, there has to be clarity about what the ends of development are and to be able to distinguish between means and ends. Second, a distinction must be made between functionings and capabilities. Third, there are conversion factors such as personal, social and environmental which can affect the degree to which resources can be turned into functionings. Fourth, there are structural constraints such as the institutions, policies, laws and social norms that people face which have an impact on their conversion factors. Finally, there are additional dimensions which can enhance the analysis of people's well-being.

Functionings and capabilities are the core concepts in the capabilities approach according to Robeyns (2017). They are the basis for inter-personal comparisons. Human functionings are "... those beings and doings that constitute human life and that are central to our understanding of ourselves as human beings" (Robeyns, 2017, p.39). Being healthy, well nourished, educated, and literate are examples of functionings. Robeyns (2017) cites Sen (1987, p.36) who maintained functionings are "... in a sense, more directly related to living conditions, since they are different aspects of living conditions". Robeyns (2017) further argues that functionings are context dependent, i.e., beings or doings that are contingent on social institutions. Capabilities, on the other hand, are "... a person's real freedoms or opportunities to achieve functionings" (Robeyns, 2017, p.39). Capabilities are what people are able to be and do, that is, what real opportunities people have with regard to the life they may lead. Functionings are achievements and capability is the ability to achieve. Functionings and capabilities are essentially well-being metrics.

Conversion factors constitute another of Robeyns' (2017) core modules. These are the abilities of people to convert resources into functionings. For Robeyns (2017) there are three groups of conversion factors: personal, social and environmental. Personal factors are internal to the person, such as their physicality, their gender or reading skills. The social conversion factors come from the society in which they live. Here public policies, social norms or societal hierarchies are at play. The environmental factors are the physical conditions in which people live, such as the built environment, access to

transport etc. Robeyns (2017) believes that, when you start to think about conversion factors, they become a very pervasive phenomenon. These three conversion factors "...push us to acknowledge that it is not sufficient to know the resources a person owns or can use in order to be able to assess the well-being that he or she has achieved or could achieve, rather, we need to know much more about the person and the circumstances in which he or she is living" (Robeyns, 2017, p.46).

Following on from the conversion factors Robeyns (2017) also speaks about the distinction between means and ends in the capability approach. Robeyns (2017) believes it is important to be clear when "...valuing something, whether we value it as an end in itself, or as a means to a valuable end" (Robeyns, 2017, p.46). For her, it is the ends that matter when thinking about well-being and quality of life. In contemplating the ends people need to be very clear about what means or enabling conditions are in place for these capabilities. Robeyns (2017) gives the example of whether people are able to be healthy and whether the means or resources are in place, for example, do people have access to clean water, adequate sanitation, or access to doctors? Robeyns (2017) argues that the importance of starting with the end goal is that we don't assume there is only one set of means to achieve this goal. Instead, the question is asked, what types of means are needed to foster a particular capability? The means in some cases can be financial and in others it may be changes in political practices and institutions. Robeyns (2017) warns that a pure focus on the means can run the risk of downplaying the normative relevance of the conversion factors, and the differences in structural constraints that people encounter.

Another core principle within the framework of Robeyns (2017) is that each person is an end. She draws on the work of Nussbaum (2000) to tease out this concept. This idea of each person as an end is known as ethical or normative individualism. Here "...individual persons, and only individual persons, are the units of moral concern. In other words, when evaluating different social arrangements, we are only interested in the (direct and indirect) effects of those arrangements on individuals" (Robeyns, p.57). She is not claiming that individuals can flourish independently of others. Ethical individualism for Robeyns (2017) asks questions as to whether the interests of each and every person are served or protected. Robeyns (2017) further argues that the capability approach does not treat people in an atomistic way.

Robeyns (2017) also maintains that there needs to be a cognisance of the structural constraints that people face. These structural constraints have an effect on people's conversion factors. Racial discrimination in the labour market is one example, where one group in society can't use their degrees or training to get ahead compared with another group. Another example is where a group in society is stigmatized as outcasts and, consequently, treated with disrespect by other groups in society.

According to Robeyns (2017) the capability approach can include other elements that can complement an analytical frame of peoples' well-being. In the case of this thesis the literature on religion and development, and the issue of human rights, further enlighten the discussion of human well-being and will be informative when conceptualising the development discourses of Irish development workers and missionaries. This approach also permits us to include a critical analysis such as the post-colonial perspective. By adding the post-colonial lens, we are able to identify the historical roots and structures of inequality and injustice that pervade the capitalist system which ultimately impact on the well-being of the individual. By drawing attention to the importance and necessity of including subaltern voices, this approach asks us to examine whether development discourses are truly participative and empowering or whether they are merely the imposition of western forms of knowledge.

In summary, the reflexive theoretical perspectives, the human development approach and post-colonialism, provide a conceptual map for classifying and analysing the development discourses of both missionaries and development workers which are analysed in Chapter Four. Another set of literature which will further help to illustrate the means, conversion factors and structural constraints is the instrumental knowledge about the practice of development and the roles, beliefs and practices of the key development actors in the field, to which we now turn.

## **2.5 Development in Practice - The Beliefs, Roles and Work Practices of Development Workers and Missionaries**

Hajer (1995) argues that meaning is produced and reproduced through practices. This section focuses on the literature that documents the various discussions on practices within the development field which contribute to the production of meaning. This body of literature embraces instrumental knowledge which is "... about providing solutions to

predefined problems, focusing on the means to achieve predetermined ends” (Burawoy, 2004, p.1606). This section of the literature examines the roles, beliefs, and practices of the missionaries and development workers who work in the field and, as such, incorporates reflexive knowledge because it concerns the goals and values which underpin the work of these actors. This literature forms the basis for the analysis in Chapters Five and Six of the beliefs, work practices and contexts of the development experiences of Irish development workers and missionaries.

### **2.5.1 The Characterisations & Criticisms of the Development Worker**

For Hindman and Fechter (2011) there is an assumption that aid workers fall into a particular stereotype, but their research reveals a category of workers that is highly complex and "...that people who work in aid make up an extremely varied group, in almost all possible respects" (Hindman and Fechter, 2011, p.8). Examining the everyday practices of aid workers reveals "...the multitude of responsibilities behind the more publicly prominent tasks of feeding babies and teaching literacy" (Hindman and Fechter, 2011, p.7). Fechter (2012) believes that the way in which aid workers are conceptualised within development studies renders them invisible. This academic invisibility allows stereotypes to flourish and hampers a candid appraisal of aid work and its challenges. An appropriate appraisal of these challenges “might help to devise strategies for how to deal with such challenges" (Fechter, 2012, p.1476). Kaplan (1999), moreover, makes an interesting point where he states: "Development practitioners are not required to pay attention to their own development as human beings, as part of effective development practice. The development practitioner's own development and processes of learning are entirely removed from the picture. There is thus little or no reciprocity in the relationship between developer and 'developee'" (Kaplan, 1999, p.6).

There are four aspects of the characterisations and criticism of development workers that I will now look at. These are: development workers as globalisers; the expert role of development workers; the power dimension attached to development work and the binary between altruism and selfishness.

Jackson (2005) describes development workers as globalisers whose mission is to promote development and the agendas of aid agencies. Jackson (2005) argues that there is an ideological element to the definition of globalisers, because they believe in the

principles of development. Jackson (2005) is of the opinion that: "Development is a euphemism for a multiplicity of agendas being promoted by donor countries to advance their own interest globally. Therefore, development workers are agents of globalisation" (Jackson, 2005, p.62).

The notion of the development worker as an expert has existed from colonial times. The last phase of colonialism was the age of the expert, "... who was nearly always white" (Vaux, 2001, p.48). Development organisations facilitate the export of experts to the developing world and these experts are regarded by Hancock (1989) as outsiders who "... come from societies which are deeply convinced of the superiority of their own values and the supremacy of their technical knowledge" (Hancock, 1989, p.22). Reflecting on her time in Laos as an adviser to the education department, Emblen (1995) recalls that:

"There was a very ambivalent attitude to their foreign advisers. I heard comments like: 'They get paid huge salaries and we have to do the work' ... 'We had to rewrite the project completely after they went' ... 'They don't know about our country .... NGO advisers don't escape scepticism, and there was the feeling that they are not always very well qualified: 'Advisers should have real expertise in their own countries'" (Emblen, 1995, p.232).

Based on her experience Emblen (1995) is of the opinion that "... the stream of advisers has had the effect of disempowering local teachers" (Emblen, 1995, p.233).

There is a paradox for the development community, according to Kanbur (2012), which is that those who work to advance the well-being of the poor and downtrodden seem to do rather well out of it themselves. Vaux (2001, p.48) holds those experts "... were not used to looking critically at political issues" and notes that aid agencies adopted a non-political approach. The main reason for this was that the superpowers were in icy conflict and opportunities for political change seemed limited. These agencies focused on apolitical local development.

The issue of closeness between the development worker and the communities they are serving has been raised by Kanbur (2012) and Fetcher (2012). Kanbur (2012) states that: "Civil service-like career structures can and do develop, and there are promotion paths to be followed in the advocacy NGOs based in the North" (Kanbur, 2012, p.4). In such an environment, Kanbur (2012) has argued "... that development professionals are led inexorably to a greater and greater distance between their work and the reality of the lives

of the poor in developing countries, whom their work is meant to be helping" (Kanbur, 2012, p.10).

Goudge (2003) raises the issue of power in development and argues that "... the apparently beneficial discourses and practices of 'Third World' development do not exist in a vacuum and are deeply imbued with and structured by issues of Power" (Goudge, 2003, p.12). Goudge, (2003, p.8), also states that: "A decision to become an aid worker is often taken - albeit unconsciously - because of one's own interests rather than those of others".

The literature on the development practitioners outlined above has made a clear case as to the important role these actors play in delivering development practice. The discussion of the various aspects of the practitioners' working lives in the field helps to identify a number of components that combine to make up a frame for examining the working lives of the Irish development workers in the field of development which will be examined in Chapters Five and Six. The components include: motivations and beliefs; the features of the work practices; changing work practices, mobility and career structures; the context of the development experiences.

The discussion on the motivations and underlying belief systems of these actors raises a number of questions. Are they motivated by personal and / or professional interests? Do they go overseas for altruistic reasons?

The literature makes the case that development workers comprise a wide variety of actors and that the work is complex. How does the nature of work and their occupational specialism shape the life journey in development? The literature discusses the work practices and identifies key features of this type of work and the agency that is required by these workers. Development work requires adaptability, experimentation, flexibility, autonomy and spontaneity. There are two types of practices in development work, according to Roth (2015). The first is 'macho' work which is about getting things done and taking risks. The second is feminine behaviour, which is mentoring, communication and team-building. Development work is, above all, a learning process (Mintzberg & Azevedo, 2012).

A number of authors draw attention to the need to examine the careers of development workers. Looking at the biographies of these workers helps in identifying the key events in this journey. How does the career dimension effect their practice of development and contribute to the process of learning? Roth (2015) examines the life and work of these workers in a more holistic way and identifies issues in the career paths which need to be examined when analysing the careers of the Irish development workers. To what extent are these careers marked by short-term contracts, precarity and work life balance issues? This type of work, however, provides individuals with opportunities to engage in meaningful work (Roth, 2015). The question then is, does this apply to the Irish development workers? This literature also draws attention to the professionalisation that has occurred in the development field. Does this professionalisation gradually permeate the work practices of the development workers in my sample? And how does this professionalisation impact on their thinking and work practices? Another question that is raised from the literature is, how does the context, such as the regional location of these work and life experiences, contribute to the process of learning? Is there an interactive effect between the different facets of the life journey? Finally, the debate about the characterisation of development workers, that is whether they are invisible, stereotyped, experts, disempowering or globalisers (promoting the agendas of NGOs), raises the question as to whether they apply to the Irish workers and whether they have an impact on who they are and what they do?

### **2.5.2 The Beliefs and Values of Development Workers**

Development practitioners are key agents in the development field. However, sociologists have neglected to study aid organisations and the people who work in them (Roth, 2015). More generally, development studies have overlooked development practitioners (Fechter, 2012a; Mangold). In recent times academics in development studies and sociology have started to investigate aid / development practitioners (Fechter, 2012, Roth, 2015). Escobar (2012) believes these new ethnographic studies of development practice "...should give theorists and practitioners a more nuanced account of how development operates as a multiscale process that is constantly transformed and contested" (Escobar, 2012, p.xv). The literature under review here addresses different aspects of the roles, beliefs, work and life experiences of individual practitioners. It further sets out the rationale for examining the individual practitioner. Following on from this the personal is approached in different ways. Authors such as De Jong (2011),



Fechter (2012), Mangold (2012) and Shutt (2012) draw attention to the beliefs, values and agency of aid workers. Another set focuses on their work, careers (Roth, 2015) and biographies (Eyben, 2012). The reflective nature of the individual aid worker is also examined. Another group of theorists examines the role and characterisation of development practitioners, including people such as Hancock (1989), Jackson (2005), Tvedt (1998). Overall, this body of literature views development workers in both positive and negative ways.

The rationale for researching the individual development practitioner is set out by Fechter (2012, a) and Roth (2015). Fechter (2012a) explains that focusing on the personal provides a complete understanding of how aid works and can help to improve practice. Fechter (2012a, p.1401) maintains that "... acknowledging the role of the personal does not mean losing sight of development's key objectives, but rather, in a complementary fashion, that such acknowledgement contributes to a more comprehensive and thus more accurate understanding of all actors in the development process". Aid workers are a special case, according to Fechter, (2012, a) because international aid workers live and work far away from their countries of origin. They are removed from their support networks of family and friends. They have to negotiate new geographic, social and cultural environments. Roth (2015) makes the distinction between working and living in 'aidland' and normal life or real life. These aid workers are seen as relevant actors in the field and significant objects of analysis (Fechter, 2012a). As relevant actors how have their beliefs, roles, work practices and characterisations been represented in the literature?

The motivations, beliefs and values of development workers are discussed in the literature. This body of literature assumes that "... aid workers' personal beliefs and attitudes are implicated in, and impact on the outcomes of aid work" (Fechter, 2012a, p.1387). There are expectations in relation to how development workers should behave and go about their work in developing countries. Development work, according to Comhlámh (2004), involves having a critical perspective of global issues. Development workers are "acting out of the awareness of the unequal power relations which influence underdevelopment throughout the world" (Comhlámh, 2004, p.15). The decision to go overseas is driven by a personal sense of social justice or equality (Fechter, 2012a). Aidwork, for Roth (2015), might be thought of as a calling or a vocation. Personal interests and altruism are part of the motivations for becoming a development worker (Hancock, 1989; De Jong, 2011 and Fechter, 2012b). De Jong believes it is important to

look beyond a simple binary between altruism and selfishness, because "... these cannot be clearly separated" and "... more attention needs to be paid to the embodied relations between people" (De Jong, 2011, p.37). Fechter (2012b) believes people are motivated by personal and professional reasons. For her:

"Many are driven neither exclusively by altruistic motives nor by self-serving career ambitions. Instead, in many cases their involvement in aid is driven by both professional and personal interests, some of them directly concerned with helping the world's poor, others perhaps less so. Further, their interests often gradually change over time. This fluid mixture of professionalism and altruism would not be considered surprising by anyone with experience in the aid sector" (Fechter, 2012, p.1485).

Mosse (2011) distinguishes between development professionals who are committed to 'purely technical universals' and professional altruists who are committed to 'moral universals'. Fechter (2012a) believes these distinctions are problematic and are more likely to be blurred. Nonetheless, they delineate the beliefs and motivations which underpin development practice.

Comhlámh draws attention to the key values they believe volunteers should have. These values are: partnership, quality, security, encouraging volunteer attitudes, sustainability, solidarity and the importance of contributing to development.<sup>20</sup> Comhlámh has provided advice and orientation for people interested in overseas development work and wants to promote responsible international volunteering. They have devised a volunteer charter, which is a guide for people who are going to volunteer overseas in developing countries and some of the principles outlined in the charter are: Volunteers should reflect on their motivations and their expectations of their volunteer placement; They should familiarise themselves with their role and the host organisation; Respect local customs and adopt the role of learner and guest; Act always in a professional manner and be flexible and adaptable; Take due care of their personal safety and physical and mental health; Channel the experiences and knowledge gained while overseas into Irish society.<sup>21</sup>

### 2.5.3 The Role of Development Workers

Authors such as Emblen (1995), Hindman and Fechter (2011), Kanbur (2012) and Kaplan (1999). Discuss how the role of the development worker has changed over the years.

---

<sup>20</sup> See <https://comhlamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Volunteer-Charter.pdf>, date accessed May 2021

<sup>21</sup> See <https://comhlamh.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Volunteer-Charter.pdf>, date accessed May 2021

There has been a move away from the general worker to a more specialised development worker (Kaplan, 1999). Kanbur (2012, p.10) believes "... development professionals, are led inexorably to a greater and greater distance between their work and the reality of the lives of the poor in developing countries, whom their work is meant to be helping". According to the UNDP (2008) the landscape of development interventions has changed from what was originally a form of technical cooperation, here described as:

"The most common approach to development in the 1970s and 1980s. At the time, priority was given to technical training and the introduction of models and systems from the North. A foreign 'technical expert' would come into a country for a short period to provide expertise and technology. This would frequently be followed by financial resources. Little attention was paid to the transfer of skills or the sustainability of interventions" (UNDP, 2008, p.23).

In the early 1990s, as stated by the UNDP (2008, p.23): "The thinking on the role of technical cooperation began to shift and the idea of capacity development began to evolve. The appropriateness of using short-term 'technical experts' was questioned. The provision of training, support to training-of-trainers and the organization of study trips became the norm". The UNDP (2008, p.23): argues that "... while external actors may be able to facilitate and promote local processes, they can also serve to undermine ownership and local capacity". Their position is that a more facilitative role is required rather than the more interventionist roles that were played in the past. Emblen (1995) asks the question: is there a place for the overseas adviser? Her answer is 'yes'. However, she is "... convinced that outside knowledge should be carefully negotiated and inter-linked with local expertise, and that local expertise should be given greater respect" (Emblen, 1995, p.235).

Kaplan (1999, p.6) holds that "... development places far more emphasis on technical experts and 'advisors', and on trainers, than it does on change facilitators". However, the development worker carries out many different functions. They can be a welfare worker, activist, organisation consultant and field worker assisting local communities (Kaplan, 1999). Even with the growth of partnership between northern and southern NGOs many northern organisations have a presence in the south and some continue to send their own field staff. The type of personnel being sent by northern NGOs has changed. There has been a move away from the general worker to a more specialised development worker. They are now sent to solve technical problems and to act as a catalyst for specific groups, acting as advisers. It follows, therefore, that the focus on the everyday lives of development workers:

"...changes the temporal and spatial scale of investigating development. Investigations that focus on policy tend to assume the time horizons of governments, while those discussing the projects begin and end with the cycle of a given programme. The demands of a career as an aid professional or even the scope of a volunteerist enforce a different perspective on the limits of the project at hand and a diverse set of viewpoints on the final product of a development pursuit" (Hindman and Fechter, 2011, p.14).

Examining the everyday practices of aid workers reveals "... the multitude of responsibilities behind the more publicly prominent tasks of feeding babies and teaching literacy" (Hindman and Fechter, 2011, p.7). Contrary to this stereotypical view development workers are a complex and varied group and are involved in a myriad of occupations (Hindman and Fechter, 2011, Roth, 2015).

The agency of development practitioners is highlighted by Kaplan (1996) Mintzberg & Azevedo (2012) and Roth (2015). These authors draw attention to the adaptability and flexibility that are required by development practitioners. They require the ability to observe and interpret situations (Kaplan, 1996). Mintzberg & Azevedo (2012) give an insight into the adaptability required in development work where "... development is above all a learning process, involving experimentation, adaptability, and spontaneity. How else to break new ground, challenge an existing status quo? Development therefore has to be worked out, very much in the Brazilian spirit of finding the way around" (Mintzberg & Azevedo, 2012, p. 905). These are 'macho' types of work practices which are about getting things done and taking risks (Roth, 2015). There are also work practices which Roth (2015) describes as feminine behaviour, and this is mentoring, communication and team-building.

There is another body of literature that examines the work, careers and life history of development practitioners. This literature focuses, in particular, on the everyday lives of development workers. Roth's (2015) study, for example, examines the career paths of aid workers. She traces people's pathways into and through what she calls 'aidland'. For her aidland is complex and encompasses development cooperation, emergency relief and human rights work. She examines what attracts people to aid work and looks at their working and living conditions, concluding that the careers of people working in aid are shaped by geopolitics, donor priorities and changes in the aid sector.

The work and careers of aid workers are investigated by Roth (2015) and Fechter (2016) within the realm of the sociology of work. Roth (2015) examines the careers of local and international aid workers wherein she posits that aid work mirrors work practices in contemporary capitalist economies and is marked by short-term contracts and work life balance issues. However, she believes that aid work provides individuals with opportunities to engage in meaningful work. Roth (2015, p.1) concludes that aidwork is "... ridden with paradoxes that are grounded in North/South inequalities and tied into neoliberalism".

Eyben (2012) adopts a life course approach and draws attention to how biographies inform individual practitioners experiences. She examines the life histories of a group of development semi-professionals. For Eyben (2012, p.1420) "... key events in their history shaped their consciousness and produced political effects that gave them the opportunity to influence development practice". For her their development practice was the art of making do, which made their agency matter.

The literature also addresses the reflective capacity of aid workers. For example, Roth (2015) makes the point that volunteering may not help the communities that are supposed to benefit. It does force them to "... reflect on their actions, practices and behaviour and contributes to a cosmopolitan outlook" (Roth, 2015, p.47). Fechter (2012a) is of the opinion that "... aid practitioners are not only well aware of what they do, but expend substantial efforts reflecting on what they are doing, why they are doing it, and what they should be doing. In this sense, the realm of beliefs, motivations and commitments represents a veritable underbelly of professional development discourse" (Fechter, 2012a, p.1393).

#### **2.5.4 Beliefs, Values and Motivations of Missionaries**

Firstly, missionaries share the altruistic motivations which development worker have and these have been discussed above. Authors such as Gallego and Woodberry (2010), Haustein and Tomalin (2017) and Smith (2017) discuss the aims and motivations of missionaries and this contains favourable and critical perspectives. The literature draws attention to the negative perception of missionaries in the development field. This stems from the long held view that the motivation of missionaries since colonial times has been conversion and proselytization. Any charitable activities they engage in only serves these

goals, therefore, altruistic motivations are interconnected with the overall aim of conversion (Gallego and Woodberry, 2010). The focus on conversion and the ‘afterlife’ created an environment where the Church encouraged people to be passive (Maathai, 2010). In such a world there was no need for missionaries to reflect on whether their beliefs led to social transformation. They were motivated by the desire to further the civilising mission and to infuse imperial colonialism with religious sentiments (Haustein and Tomalin, 2017). Indeed, such religious belief systems promoted what post-colonial theorists call the practice of ‘othering’.

Smith (2017) adopts a favourable view of missionaries as development actors and argues that it is important to focus on the shared space between religion and development, rather than focusing on the separate spheres that development workers and missionaries occupy. Smith (2017) distinguishes between the material and sacred influence in development. The sacred focuses on what the development actors believe and value. Enquiring “about beliefs is complicated, but necessary to understand the ideological aspects of development” (Smith, 2017, p.24). Paying attention to the sacred influences expands the reflective space for examining the interaction between beliefs and practices (Smith, 2017). Smith (2017) argues that religious communities:

“Do not have inherently better values than development actors, but they do share a history of reflecting on how their values and beliefs are embodied in actions, and a community that tries to embody ethical standards. Missionaries in particular, because of the primacy of beliefs in their practice, have long reflected on issues of cultural sensitivity and how individual and social transformation are embodied. In the process of positioning today’s missionaries, development scholars and practitioners can learn more about imposition and service in the beliefs and practices of development (Smith, 2017, p.28).

In the case of Catholic missionaries, the underlying beliefs and values have been influenced by generational changes in Catholic social thinking and theological perspectives such as liberation theology which have been outlined above. These Catholic missionaries are motivated by their Christian role which Deneulin (2013) argues is bringing God into the economic, social and political structures. As has been discussed earlier religious beliefs can foster and perpetuate forms of inequality in society such as gender inequality.

Smith (2017) believes that we can learn a lot when we combine research on religion with development, because this link raises two questions: Firstly, how do missionaries and development actors, apply their beliefs and values to development programs and,

secondly, how does the local context influence the application of these beliefs and values? These two questions will be useful when analysing the motivations, work and life experiences in Chapters Five and Six.

### **2.5.5 The Role of Missionaries**

#### **2.55.a Contested Missionary Practices**

Even though there has been a refocus on religion within development studies, the role in development of Christian missionaries and missionaries from other religions has been neglected (Smith, 2017). Within this body of literature, the role and contribution of missionaries is contested. Missionaries are considered by some as outside the development world while others see them as part and parcel of the Western development sector. Although some argue that they seem to be working in a parallel space to development workers they are clearly distinguishable from them (Smith 2017). Smith (2017) however, argues that these two different groups of actors occupy a shared space and face similar challenges working in this field. The challenges faced by development workers have been documented earlier in this chapter. Many missionaries do not want to be located in the development field, rather they prefer to operate in a fuzzy zone between religion and development. Religious actors also have a choice of whether to be involved in development or not (Smith, 2017). They are considered by some as malevolent or irrelevant actors whilst others see them as ambivalent (Smith, 2017). One part of the explanation put forward by Smith (2017) is that there has been a complicated relationship between missionaries and development workers. Even though the role of the missionary has changed since the 1960s, they remain associated with coercive proselytization (Smith, 2017). The portrayal of the missionary as a 19th-century white European male subjugating local people and an outdated relic of a colonial past doesn't represent the modern missionary, according to Smith (2017). This portrayal has led to a situation where missionaries have been "... lampooned and pilloried as agents of imperialism, destroyers of indigenous cultures, ideologically driven manipulators of vulnerable natives" (Bradbury, 2013, p.427). These narratives have been driven by the traditional role occupied by missionaries where they focused on conversion and were associated with the crusader period of mission (Dorr, 2000). This crusader mindset still lingers in what

Dorr (2000) calls the older missionaries. It must be noted that this insensitive proselytization is not permitted by many donors and donor countries (Smith, 2017).

#### 2.55.b The Changes in the Role of the Missionary

Vatican II heralded a renewal of theology and led to changes in the role of missionaries, where they moved away from coercive proselytization. The aim of missionaries today, in Dorr's opinion, is to be in genuine solidarity with people who are on the margins, receiving and giving in a spirit of dialogue and sharing. There are two categories of missionary, according to Dorr (2000). The first type focuses on building up the Church in the areas of community and institutions. The second type of missionary is concerned with key Christian values and wants to live these values, that is to give witness to them and promote them in society (Dorr, 2000). These missionaries, maintains Dorr (2000), may devote their time to activities such as building primary care centres or may work for the promotion of human rights. He uses this distinction because each type may have, at times, quite different priorities. Mission, therefore, is not just a matter of doing things for people, it is about being with people, listening to them and sharing with them. There is a commitment by missionary groups to justice and a compassion for the poor (Bradbury, 2013). This places a high emphasis on "... improving the living conditions of the communities within which they work as part of their concern with propagating the word of God" (Deneulin and Bano, 2009, p.15), thereby illustrating the spiritual and social aspects of mission (Bosch, 1991). Bradbury (2013) argues that the "... missionary commitment to evangelism, in its purest and most biblically shaped manifestations, is motivated by genuine concern for the others' well-being" (Bradbury, 2013, p.420). The truth, for Humphreys (2010), is that missionaries have "... moved from pure evangelism to something close to pure social work in a generation or two" (Humphreys, 2010, p.5).

Alongside evangelism missionaries have been involved in humanitarian and charitable assistance relief and the provision of social services such as in the areas of health and education (Lunn, 2009; Taithe, 2012). As has been discussed earlier in this chapter these types of work activities date back to colonial times and missionaries continue to bring from their homelands skills and experiences of running schools (Gallego and Woodberry, 2010). Larreguy and Schmidt-Padilla (2021) argue that the missionary colonial legacy in education has had a positive effect on long run educational outcomes. And these



missionaries laid the groundwork for the post-colonial educational intuitions. Missionaries continue to be important actors providing social welfare and Lunn (2009) gives the example of Uganda where nearly half of primary healthcare services are provided by religious. The neoliberal policies of the 1980s created a space for religious to provide services in areas neglected by the state (Lunn, 2009). Some missionaries may be happy to operate on secular terms in the development sector, however, they do not see themselves as handmaids of the neo-liberal consensus (Tomalin, 2018). There are others who are more critical and don't like that they are being instrumentalised by development organisations to achieve predefined goals that reflect the neo-liberal development agenda (Tomalin, 2018).

Alongside the social welfare activities of the missionaries there is a commitment to justice and a compassion for the poor (Bradbury, 2013). This places a high emphasis on "... improving the living conditions of the communities within which they work as part of their concern with propagating the word of God" (Deneulin and Bano, 2009, p.15), thereby illustrating the spiritual and social aspects of mission (Bosch, 1991). Bradbury (2013) argues that the "... missionary commitment to evangelism, in its purest and most biblically shaped manifestations, is motivated by genuine concern for the others' well-being" (Bradbury, 2013, p.420).

As discussed in Chapter One, Misesan Cara is a faith-based organisation which channels donor funding to Irish missionaries working on development related projects. In order to clarify and define the role of the Irish missionary in development, in 2018 Misesan Cara devised what they call a missionary model of development, stating that the "...ultimate aim of the missionary approach is to enrich and transform the lives of poor, vulnerable and marginalised people across the globe" (Misesan Cara, 2018, p.1). They argue that there are five features which describe the unique way missionaries do development work. These features are: Missionaries cross boundaries in a variety of ways; have long-term commitment and local presence on the ground where projects are being implemented: (this provides missionaries with a high degree of credibility, trust and influence within the communities where they work); they have a personal witness of commitment to Christian and missionary values (they are dedicated to their work, have a simple lifestyle and have solidarity with the poor); Prophetic vision to take action to address community problems; they adopt a holistic approach: missionaries see and treat individuals and

communities not just as beneficiaries of a specific project, but as dignified human beings with a wide range of capacities, needs and rights to be addressed (Misean Cara, 2018, p.1). Moreover, missionary development projects within this approach to development:

"...all take their ultimate inspiration from the Christian values, ethos and approaches of the organisations that implement them. Core principles and concepts such as human dignity, social justice, option for the poor, solidarity, subsidiarity and care for creation are fundamental to the way in which projects are designed and implemented for the benefit of poor, vulnerable and marginalised people throughout the world. Projects are also influenced by the particular key commitment or 'charism' (spiritual gift) of the implementing congregation. Some, such as Misean Cara members, further emphasise the related core values of respect, justice, commitment, compassion and integrity" (Misean Cara, 2018, p.1).

It is true that Misean Cara's definition of the development work of Irish missionaries is similar to traditional development NGOs. This definition however, isn't devoid of religious principles and is illustrative of the shared space and the interaction between the sacred and the material that Smith (2017) speaks of. Misean Cara functions as a mechanism for professionalising and integrating the work of Irish missionaries into the mainstream of the Irish development field, so that there is less of what Smith (2017) calls a 'fuzzy zone' between religion and development.

#### 2.55.c The Role of Missionary Sisters

Vatican II was a moment of change for religious sisters in the Catholic Church, where life was less structured and regimented. Vatican II allowed religious sisters "to claim more positive identity as individuals and as women" (McKenna, 2006, p.142). In spite of this religious sisters still have a subordinate role within the Catholic Church and have been excluded from full participation in the Church's ministry (Eze, Lindegger and Rakoczy (2013). The Catholic Church has constructed a vision of the religious sister as somebody who lives a life of self-sacrifice and devotes herself wholeheartedly to God and the Church (Brock, 2010). Their work is undertaken on the basis of their obligation to obey a religious obligation to charity and compassion (Taithe, 2012). Religious sisters resist this type of representation. They use their agency to make decisions about their own lives. Their own understanding is that the Church is made up of all baptized Catholics and, as such, they are positioned as full family members of this Church who share the responsibility of ongoing transformation within the Church (Eze, Lindegger and Rakoczy (2013). In Ireland religious life gave nuns the opportunity to claim a professional

place in society (McKenna, 2006; Fahey, 1992). Religious life was designated as a profession in the census of population (McKenna, 2006). It was also a life which gave Irish women the opportunity for professional training (McKenna, 2006). This was one of the appealing features for women when they decided to join these religious congregations as professional careers were limited for women in Ireland due to “resources, legislation and social mores” (McKenna, 2006, p.59). Religious sisters embarked on training in areas such as education, health and social work. Irish nuns gained a considerable positive reputation from their professional work activities (McKenna, 2006).

## **2.6 Development in Practice - The Role, Practices and Criticisms of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Faith-Based Organisations**

As Discussed in Chapter One Irish NGOs are one of the main pillars of the Irish development field and have been sending volunteers and development professionals to the global south. Scholars such as Eade (2003), Kenny (2012) and Swidler (2013) have investigated the role and practices of NGOs in development and these are discussed below. Irish missionary organisations along with Misesan Cara are best described as faith-based organisations and were pioneers in the Irish development field. The role of institutional religious actors such as faith-organisations in development is discussed by authors such as Smith (2017), Spies and Schrode (2021) and Tomalin (2021) and these are discussed below.

### **2.6.1 The Role, Practices and Criticisms of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)**

As the principal development actors in the field NGOs champion the cause of development (Hirono, 2008). They hold the structural position once held by missionaries especially in the provision of social care activities (Haustein, 2021; Tomalin, 2018). The work of these organisations features specific practices, such as capacity-building, empowerment and participation. As the dominant actors in the development field, NGOs may be “contributing to the reinforcement of Western-centred epistemologies, and the resulting reinforcement of the non-West into categories of the West's own making” (Kenny, 2008, p.73). These organisations spread their beliefs and values and tend to operate with an air of superiority as opposed to the inferiority of the recipients of their assistance (Hirono, 2008). Hancock (1989) believes aid organisations are "riddled with

compassion but are inherently ethnocentric, paternalistic and non-professional" (Hancock, 1989, p.22). Swidler and Watkins (2012) argue that NGOs who are deep-pocketed donors who design and fund policies and programs on behalf of the poor, operate through an aid chain. The result is that they don't actually reach their intended beneficiaries directly. NGO practices, for Swidler (2013):

“... create a capricious, irrationalizing economic environment as donors pursue short-term projects in a scattershot way, suddenly descending on one village (often where they have a contact), while ignoring others; bringing small amounts of funding but with no obligation to complete a project or follow through on promises; and choosing projects in terms of what is fashionable in the global funding environment, whether or not it is something local people need or want” (Swidler, 2013 p.685).

NGOs have experienced significant pressures to professionalise (Eade, 2003; Hailey, 2000; Smillie, 1997). Some believe that the management techniques which have been drawn from the public and private sectors are unsuitable for the NGO sector. Project design, planning and financial controls are now stressed. Eade (2003) believes that a new, managerialist wave swept through the NGO sector in the 1990s. The professionalization has been in part due to the increasing demands on the part of donors. Eade makes a valid point when saying that:

“Today’s neodevelopmentalist discourse is far from a liberating one. On the contrary, it tends to wrap both NGOs and their counterparts (or ‘clients’) up in so much technical and bureaucratic red tape that they can scarcely move, much less think, ‘outside the box’. Little wonder that some observers in the South as well as in the North have concluded that the institutional needs of NGOs now come before those of the organisations they seek to support” (Eade, 2003:1).

Hailey (2000) is of the view that the values which underpin the work of NGOs are under threat from donors. Increased competition for funds will allow donors to attach more and more conditions to aid. This has resulted in the very concept of aid being called into question. Hancock (1989) argues that, despite all the spending over 50 years there is little evidence that the poor of the Third World have benefitted. Moyo (2009) is of the opinion that aid has fostered dependency, encouraged corruption and ultimately perpetuated poor governance and poverty. Bolton (2007) maintains that a key problem for aid is that it has been underfunded over the years.

Some authors draw attention to the politicisation of aid (Hancock, 1989; Kothari, 2005; Riddell, 2007; Collier, 2008). This politicisation, according to Collier (2008), has led to a dysfunctional aid system. Riddell (2007) believes that there are political and governance issues in relation to aid. Donors want to give aid to countries that have the

capacity to use it. The reality is that the countries that have the greatest need do not have the capacity to use it. Riddell (2007) is of the view that weak institutions and governance act as a constraint on the effective use of aid. Kothari (2005) argues that there has been a political imperative to distance the international aid industry from the dimension of colonialism. The aim is not to tarnish the humanitarian project with the supposed exploitation of the colonial era.

Riddell (2007) argues that problems with aid can occur at a more micro level. There can be problems with specific programmes or projects. He also says that problems occur due to the poor decisions of individuals or agencies. There can be capacity issues at the organisational level too. Riddell (2007) believes problems stem from insufficient knowledge of what the needs of the community are. This highlights the superiority embedded in the development field, where subaltern voices are not listened to and decisions are made on high and imposed on communities.

### **2.6.2 The Role, Practices and Criticisms of Faith-Based Organisations**

The research on religion and development also included an institutional focus (Spies and Schrode, 2021; Tomalin, 2021) examining the role of faith-based organisations in development acknowledging that these organisations have been, and continue to be, active in the field of development (Clarke 2008; Jennings 2013; Linden 2008). Smith (2017) argues the research on faith-based organisations has broken new ground because it explores the links between the beliefs and practices of religious actors who do development work. Faith-based organisations, according to Deneulin and Bano (2009), "...remain the most significant non-state providers of basic social services to the poor in many developing countries" (Deneulin and Bano, 2009, p.15). They go further, maintaining that "... the notion of social justice has been critical to the work of Christian and Muslim missionary groups. Both have placed high emphasis on improving the living conditions of the communities within which they work as part of their concern with propagating the word of God" (Deneulin and Bano, 2009, p.15). Some researchers have also studied the relations between these organisations and development NGOs. Faith-based organisations have been described as the forerunners of modern-day development NGOs (Clarke, 2006).

Other critics in the literature in this period draw attention to unsubstantiated claims about the advantages that FBOs have over the state or other-actors (Haustein, 2021). These critics draw attention to how privileging the role of faith-based organisations in development was at the expense of marginalising the role and perspectives of local, faith actors (Tomalin,2021). This body of literature also criticises secular global development institutions who pick and choose the type of organisation they work with on the basis of shared liberal values and those who express their faith ‘passively’ (Tomalin, 2020, 2021). The identity and role of faith-based organisations in the religion-development nexus are called into question in the literature. It is also argued that these organisations adopted discourses and work practices which made it impossible to distinguish them from secular development agencies (Ager and Ager, 2012). It is also claimed that faith-based organisations carry out the neoliberal agenda and reinforce structures of oppression (Ager and Ager, 2012; Tomalin, 2021). Haustein (2021) also draws attention to how there is a colonial continuity through the charitable monopoly that Christian missions retained in social care, education and poverty alleviation. Capacity-building and other development activities helped to prolong the missionary presence in Africa (Haustein, 2021).

Development organisations, according to Khalaf-Elledge (2021, p.4), “... face difficulties implementing projects in communities where they have systematically neglected, misunderstood, or perpetuated patriarchal dynamics of the religion—gender nexus”. Development practice has been slow to address the gender implications of its religious partnerships. Furthermore, “... there is little acknowledgement of how donor countries' own religious politics have influenced gendered development efforts. If development continues to ignore this issue, it perpetuates the dangerous confusion of religion and patriarchy which not only obstructs gender equality but also sacralises it” ( Khalaf-Elledge, 2021, p.4).

In the current era of research on the religion-development nexus the emphasis is placed on analysing the interrelationship of religion and development (Haustein, 2021; Spies and Schrode, 2021; Tomalin, 2018, 2021). These authors have coalesced around the idea of ‘religious engineering’ as a tool for analysing the interrelation between religion and development. The starting point in this analysis is to not to presuppose that religion, secularity and development are separate spheres or concepts (Spies and Schrode, 2021). In adopting a relational perspective, Spies and Schrode (2021, p.6) “take concepts such as development, religion, projects of transformation, and religious traditions as

configurations composed of relations, that is, as coming into being and forming as separate entities or categories only by relating to other concepts, traditions, practices or knowledges”. They further argue that “relations may include forms of cooperation and exchange, but also conflict, denial or resistance. Religious engineering involves relational practices that constitute and shape what is understood as development, religious, Christian, Islamic or secular in specific contexts, and it is at the same time itself also product of such discourses and relational practices (Spies and Schrode, 2021, p.6).

The concept of religious engineering, according to Spies and Schrode (2021, p.6) allows for:

"An analysis of different projects of transformation, improvement or change without limiting ourselves to narrow concepts of religion, secularity, and development. The notion religious engineering refers to active and conscious ways of working on the future shape of a given society, of individuals or the world, where the ‘engineers’ of such transformative projects refer to religious resources such as religious traditions, practices, identities or institutions. At the same time, the concept alludes to active transformations of religious traditions and self-understanding that are spurred on by specific projects of societal and/or individual improvement. It thus also captures activities that try to relate religious traditions to new social, political and economic spaces of opportunity, to processes of in-/exclusion, and to restrictions or openings of economic regimes”.

Thus, religious engineering allows for the investigation of how notions of religion and development emerge, constitute and relate in practices of change (Spies and Schrode, 2021). Tomalin (2021) draws attention to how ‘religious engineering’ may have negative connotations due to its association with ‘social engineering’ in totalitarian and colonial states, where more powerful actors use their privileged vantage point to maintain control.

In devising and using the concept of religious engineering the focus for Spies and Schrode (2021, p.14) “lies on what actors do and the projects of change, transformation or development they pursue. We explore the (changing) meanings and roles they ascribe to religion in the context of their projects and in what way they refer to the world of international development”.

Tomalin (2018,2021) uses the idea of religious engineering to analyse the interface relations between faith-based organisations and secular development NGOs on the one hand and local faith actors on the other. Faith-based organisations are participating in different projects of religious engineering, according to Tomalin (2021). For Tomalin (2021, p.19) faith actors:

“In the same way as other civil society actors, interact in a range of forums where they use a different language and ways of engaging according to the character of other participants. While many faith actors deliberately maintain a “secular” persona in their public engagement with the SDGs (sustainable development goals), they are at the same time able to also engage with local faith communities in terms of religious language and concepts where appropriate”.

International faith-based organisations as religious engineers play an important role as brokers or intermediaries where they build the capacity of local faith actors in the Global South who are often disconnected from the global development industry (Tomalin, 2021).

The literature discussed in this chapter sets out the debate about the contested role of religion and missionaries in development. It also highlights the underlying beliefs and values of missionaries. It further explicates the range of theological perspectives and aspects of Catholic social teaching. It will be important, therefore, to examine the extent to which these perspectives contribute to the motivations, beliefs and work practices of the Irish missionaries. The literature also outlines the nature of missionary work which has spiritual and social dimensions. Do the work practices of the Irish missionaries include spiritual and social dimensions? How is their work driven by their beliefs and how does it reflect the context of their work? And do they reflect Dorr’s vision of missionary work where mission is not just a matter of doing things for people, it is about being with people, listening and sharing with them? Is there a commitment to justice and a compassion for the poor (Bradbury, 2013)?

## **2.7 Making Sense of Development Biographies and Discourses: Ethics, Situated Learning and Reflexivity**

How should we understand how these experiences of development workers shape their understandings and discourses of development? In order to understand this, I focus on three critical processes.

First, as noted above, the authors who focus on the work practices of development workers and missionaries draw attention to their underlying beliefs, values and agency. Similarly, Burawoy (2004) makes the case for examining the goals and values that underpin people’s practices and knowledge. In order to fully appreciate the role that these values play in the work practices and thinking of Irish missionaries and development workers I use the literature from cultural and realist sociology. This literature focuses on the ethics, beliefs, commitments, reflections and agency of individual actors and helps to



explain the important role of values and beliefs in how people act in the world. Sayer (2011) argues that it is important to understand an individual's ethical and moral dimension which underpins their relationships with the world.

Second, as noted in the literature above, discourses confer meaning on a phenomenon and meaning is produced and reproduced through practices (Hajer, 1995). Development is regarded as a process of learning by Mintzberg & Azevedo (2012). In order to understand and analyse this process of learning in the context of Irish development workers and missionaries I draw on the theoretical perspective which discusses the central ideas of learning through practice, namely: situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991). I particularly focus on situated learning in work and in communities.

Third, Archer (2000) and Sayer (2005, 2011) draw attention to the role that reflexivity and agency play in who and what a person is and the practices they are engaged in. We pay attention to the sources of the ideas and available discourses that actors can use to 'reflect with'.

These three sets of literature make up my analytical frame, assist with the goal of understanding the process of learning that generates the discourses of development of the Irish development workers and missionaries.

### **2.7.1 Ethical Dispositions**

The development literature has stressed the importance of the motivations, values and beliefs of development workers and missionaries to their practices and thinking. The work of Andrew Sayer (2005; 2011) seeks to draw attention to, and understand, people's ethical dispositions and their relation to the social world. Sayer's primary concern is with the normative effect of dispositions and their impact on the well-being of others. His approach, which is rooted in cultural and realist sociology, bears certain similarities to human development and capabilities. Sayer (2005, p.25) also believes that ethical dispositions develop through socialisation and that they are not:

"... reducible to expressions of mere interests, nor are the norms with which they are associated reducible to expression of mere conventions. Rather they have a normative force deriving from their implications for well-being. Like commitments ethical dispositions and beliefs need not merely promote the actor's self-interest, but to varying degrees can include the welfare of others, thus being eudaimonistic rather than egotistic - that is oriented to social well-being and happiness" (Sayer, 2005, p.51).

For Sayer (2005) different moral sentiments have different normative structures. These sentiments are a response to the circumstances people find themselves in. This ties in with the view outlined above, namely that learning through practice places an emphasis on the relation between the person and the social world as they constitute each other (Wenger, 2010; Wenger-Trayner et al, 2016). Moral sentiments also reflect how people are treated. Sayer (2011) regards people as sentient and evaluative beings, where:

"Things matter to people, and make a difference to how they are. Their lives can go well or badly and their sense of well-being depends at least in part on how these other things that they care about - significant others, practices, objects, political causes - are faring, and on how others are treating them. In some respects, the answers are very subjective and personal, yet they are not just free-floating values or expressions projected onto the world but feelings about various events and circumstances that aren't merely subjective. They reflect that we are social beings - dependent on others and necessarily involved in social practices. They also remind us that we are sentient, evaluative beings, we don't just think and interact but evaluate things, including the past and the future" (Sayer, 2011, p.1).

Sayer (2011) adds a normative dimension to the relation between the person and the social world. He says the important questions that people are faced with in daily life "... tend to be normative ones of what is good or bad about what is happening, including how others are treating them, and how to act and what to do for the best" (Sayer, 2011, p.1). People's concerns are what Sayer (2011) calls matters of practical reason and need to be placed within local, contextual knowledge. This practical knowledge comes from extensive practice or "immersion" (Sayer, 2011, p.237). The practical reason Sayer (2011) speaks of is part and parcel of the learning process that occurs through engagement with the social world. Practice, identity and meaning are shaped through practical reason. Sayer (2011) believes that social theorists have tended to focus on one type of practical reason namely instrumental or means-end rationality. In this instance, "... given a particular end or goal, we reason how to achieve it in the most effective and efficient way" (Sayer, 2011, p.61). He maintains that there are other forms of practical reason which need to be taken into consideration. The forms of practical reason that Sayer (2011) focuses on consist of reasoning about what we should do. This type of reasoning is concerned with ends rather than means, they are concrete and embedded rather than abstract. They embrace ethical judgement and involve know-how (Sayer, 2011, p.61). He argues that judgements about ends are based on an awareness of well-being and he holds that practical reason requires "... experience of the past cases and attentiveness to the specificities of present cases and contexts" (Sayer, 2011, p.79). Many of our practical

judgements are ethical ones, which involve "... treating others as ends in themselves and in a way that is responsive to their particularities" (Sayer, 2011, p.82). Sayer continues by observing that "... the practical social experience of relating to others in different situations is an important source of ethical wisdom" (Sayer, 2011, p.82). The form of practical reasoning that Sayer (2011) articulates corresponds to Burawoy's 2004 discussion about reflexive and instrumental knowledge. Sayer's approach is also similar to the human development and capabilities approach because he is concerned with ends and the well-being of others.

The sense of becoming, as outlined by Wenger (2010) in his account of learning through practice, also features in Sayer's description of practical reason. Sayer (2011) gives the example of nurses and how they become competent nurses. He argues that universal rules and procedures are simply the starting point, but they are not enough to make them competent nurses. Competency is acquired through extensive exposure to different experiences. It is through this process that they acquire an effective and efficient feel for the game. Sayer (2011) maintains that becoming a skilled nurse, for example, requires more than acquiring technical expertise. He also states that the quality of interactions is important for practical reason and wisdom.

We use this perspective to inform first a focus on the motivations of development workers, as discussed in the literature above. However, it also shapes the analysis on how development discourses are shaped through situated learning and reflexivity.

### **2.7.2 Learning through Practice - Situated Learning**

Lave and Wenger first introduced the idea of situated learning in their 1991 book 'Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation'. They believe that learning in social practice is the person acting in the world. Learning is a socially constituted experience of meaning-making, where the emphasis is on the relationship between the person and the social world as they constitute each other (Wenger, 2010; Wenger-Trayner et al, 2016). For Lave and Wenger (1991) it is the lived-in world of everyday activities which forms the basis of the production and transformation of people's identities, knowledge and skills. Knowledge does not "act separately from engagement in practice" (Holland and Lave 2019, p.2). Ultimately, as Billet (2007, p.57) holds, learning "...needs to be understood as relational interdependence between the social world of working life and individuals as workers, with a particularly potent mediating role being exercised in these negotiations

by the individual". Lave and Wenger (1991, p.51) argue that a theory of social practice emphasises:

"The relational interdependency of agent and world, activity, meaning cognition, learning and knowing. It emphasizes the inherently socially negotiated character of meaning and the interested, concerned character of the thought and actions of persons-in-activity. This view also claims that learning, thinking and knowing are relations among people in activity in, with, and arising from the socially and culturally structured world" (Lave and Wenger, 1991, p.51).

The lasting legacy of Lave and Wenger's 1991 work, according to Billett, "... lies in its discussion of the relationship between the personal and immediate social experience in learning through participation (Hughes, Jenson and Unwin, 2007, p.6). Billet "... calls for the reinstatement of the individual agent as equal in importance to the community in which they are situated" (Hughes, Jenson and Unwin, 2007, p.7). Both "... the situation (community) and the individual are shaped by and, in turn, help to shape each other" (Hughes, Jenson and Unwin, 2007, p.7). Billett (2007) argues for the inclusion of the individual's life history in order to understand the process of learning fully. He (2007) argues that there are certain legacies that arise from an individual's engagement with the social world in the course of their life histories. He further maintains that there is an element of learning in these legacies, because there are experiences that are peculiar to the individual concerned. The individual needs to act agentially in order to make sense of what they experience. Billet also argues that "... the negotiations between the individual and the social are shaped by their agency, which includes personal interests, focuses and energies" (Billett, 2007, p.56).

We apply the literature on learning through practice – situated learning - when examining the process of learning through practice that occurs through work and the organisations for which missionaries and development workers work.

### **2.7.3 Reflexivity and Agency**

As noted above agency is an important aspect of a person's relationship to the world. Another key element in the process of learning is reflexivity. Roth (2015) believes people in contemporary societies are wedded to an ethic of individual self-fulfilment, self-identity and continuous reflexive interaction with the wider social environment. The search for self-fulfilment, self-identity, is what Roth (2015) calls self-realisation, which

involves sharing common values, belonging to networks of solidarity and being recognised by others. Reflexivity is defined as "the regular exercise of the mental ability, shared by all normal people, to consider themselves in relation to their social contexts and vice versa" (Archer, 2014, p.35). Reflexivity is an important evaluative tool, and Archer (2000) argues that an individual has "powers of ongoing reflexive monitoring of both self and society which enables this subject to make commitments in a genuine act of solidarity" (Archer, 2000, p.295). People, according to Archer (2000), are constantly monitoring and evaluating what they are devoted to. As noted above, agency is an important aspect of a person's relationship with the world. Another key element in the process of learning is reflexivity, and Archer (2000), argues that an individual has "...powers of ongoing reflexive monitoring of both self and society which enables this subject to make commitments in a genuine act of solidarity" (Archer, 2000, p.295). According to Archer (2000) people are constantly monitoring and evaluating what they are devoted to and if they believe that these concerns are still worthy of their devotion then the person makes a genuine act of commitment. Archer (2000) maintains that these are real commitments and not "... devices which cloak self-interest" (Archer, 2000, p.298). An agent's commitments (Archer, 2014, p.41) "... become their compass for making their way through the fast-changing social environment" (Archer, 2014, p.41). Archer (2014, p.35) also argues that "... since the response of an agent to a constraint or an enablement is a matter of reflexive deliberation, it can take very different forms from compliance to evasion and strategic action to subversion". When reflexivity occurs in novel situations, in Archer's view (2014, p.42), people must be more self-critical and more socially evaluative. Overall, the evaluative judgements of what is the best way to act informs how people do things, and the experiences they have and how their identity is constructed.

How do these three sets of literature assist with the goal of understanding the process of learning that generates the discourses of development of the Irish missionaries and development workers? Firstly, the literature on situated learning provides a frame for understanding and analysing the process of learning of Irish development workers. This literature argues that learning in social practice is the person acting in the world. There is an emphasis on the relationship between the person and the social world as they constitute each other. Therefore, learning about development comes from being engaged in the practice of development because knowledge does not "... act separately from engagement in practice" (Holland and Lave, 2009, p.2). Another important element is

that learning, thinking and knowing are relations among people in activity in, with, and arising from the socially and culturally structured world. Thus, the social world the Irish development workers inhabit has a bearing on how and what they learn about development.

We can develop this understanding of learning further by incorporating the four components in Wenger's social theory of learning which are: meaning, practice, community and identity. Meaning is generated through experience. Practice is doing and essentially a process by which people can experience the world, and their engagement with it, as meaningful. This ties in with what Roth (2015) sees as the search for meaningful work amongst the aid-workers she has studied. People also learn through belonging to a community and their identity is shaped through becoming, which is gaining a competency, which is, in turn, meaningful to them. Do the Irish development workers display these traits in their life journeys and processes of learning?

The literature on situated learning makes the case for the engaged person interacting with the social world and learning through practice. A different field of literature emphasises that such processes also necessarily involve ethical dispositions and explores how people engage with the social world as evaluative beings who employ practical reason focused on the ends rather than solely on the means when interacting with the social world. People respond to, evaluate and reflect on the circumstances they find themselves in. Further to these evaluations and reflections people make and review their commitments.

Sayer argues that an individual's ethical dispositions have a normative force which stems from their implications for well-being. For Sayer (2005) different moral sentiments have different normative structures. These sentiments are a response to the circumstances people find themselves in and also, significantly, reflect that people "are social beings - dependent on others and involved in social practices. People are evaluative beings, who evaluate things, including the past and the future" (Sayer, 2011, p.1). To what extent are the missionaries and Irish development workers evaluative beings? Sayer (2011) sees the concerns they have as matters of practical reason. The knowledge associated with this practical reason comes from extensive practice or immersion. It is a type of reasoning specifically concerned with ends rather than means.

Archer emphasises that such evaluative beings are characterised by the individual's reflexivity and agency. Reflexivity, for Archer (2014), is how people consider themselves continually in relation to their social contexts. This power of reflexivity enables people to make commitments in a genuine act of solidarity (Archer, 2000). An agent's commitments become their compass for making their way through the social environment. To what extent are the missionaries and Irish development workers reflexive beings and do they make the commitments Archer (2000) speaks of?

In the process of reflexive deliberation people draw on the available discourses and frames to understand the situations they are in. What are the available frames that missionaries and development workers draw on and what use do they make of them in their reflexive deliberations?

This literature allows us to investigate where the ethical dispositions of the Irish development workers come from and how and why they change over the life course. Thus, this process of evaluation and reflexivity informs their commitments, practices and, ultimately, their understanding of development. The evaluations and reflections of the Irish development workers and missionaries constitute the reflexive knowledge that Burawoy (2004) speaks of.

## **2.8 Conclusion**

The literature discussed here provides a number of functions for this thesis. Firstly, the debate at a theoretical level and the literature on development practice serve as a basis for identifying the range of discourses and ideas which constitute the body of knowledge within the development field. This literature review, and the associated range of ideas, provide a framework for conceptualising and classifying the dense, descriptive accounts of development, or the discourses of Irish development workers and missionaries, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

The discourses within the development literature, as reviewed here, are either favourable or critical. Post-colonialism is a perspective at the critical end and raises important points which will be of benefit when analysing the discourses of development of Irish development workers and missionaries. This perspective will assist in teasing out the tensions within these development discourses. Post-colonialism asks us to think about

how the core problem of development is defined. Is it focused on seamless development and compassion or is it framed around inequality and injustice, which has structures, systems and power relations that maintain exploitation? The development field is built on Eurocentric forms of knowledge and the question then is, to what extent do the Irish discourses of development contain their own version of ‘othering’? How are these discourses formulated through the development workers and missionaries listening to the ‘subaltern’ voices, (who are a repository of alternative indigenous conceptions of community and identity (Schech & Haggis, 2002))? How does witnessing the struggles of the people who are living with impoverishment and inequality create the space for some of these Irish missionaries and development workers to identify and criticise the Eurocentric forms of knowledge and practices in the development field?

The development literature tends to see theory and practice as running in parallel lines. Robeyns’ (2017) multidimensional view allows us to examine the interconnections between theory and practice within the realms of a capability approach. Her perspective enables us to consider both reflexive and instrumental forms of knowledge and how they inform each other. Her model serves as a complementary frame in which to explore the questions raised by the post-colonial approach to development. When employing this frame, it is important not to adopt a Eurocentric view of development. Robeyns’ (2017) model firstly directs us to specify the ends of development but allows space to consider how the means impact upon these ends. However, when specifying these ends and means it is essential to ensure that it is the ‘subaltern voices’ that are heard. Her frame allows us to incorporate critical voices surrounding policies which emanated from theoretical perspectives. Robeyns’ (2017) model also allows us to incorporate critical accounts at the level of practice such as the failures of development projects and questioning of the roles and activities of development actors. These accounts allow for additional perspectives to be added. In the case of this thesis one added feature is religious beliefs and practices. In summary, this frame has the following elements: Are people defined as the ends of Development? If so, how is personal development defined? Is it in secular capabilities or in religious terms or both? The human development literature identifies dimensions of well-being, but are these present in the narratives? Are they described as functionings or capabilities? Participation is an important additional element associated with human development and is this present in the Irish narratives and, if it is, how is it conceptualised as an end in itself or as a means of achieving well-being? Is participation based on the imposition of Eurocentric forms of knowledge or does it involve the real



participation of the 'subaltern'? The practice literature outlines criticism of development practice. Are all these critical elements in the Irish discourse? There are critical voices at the level of practice. Are these present in the Irish discourses? Are they defined in terms of conversion factors or as structural constraints? The literature also draws attention to criticisms at the macro policy level. Are these present in the Irish narratives? Two further, related dimensions associated with human development are politics and political values. Are these present in the narratives?

Following on from the analysis of the discourses of development this thesis seeks to examine the process of learning that generates these development narratives. The study aims to understand how this process of learning is shaped by a range of employment, occupational, biographical, political and regional contexts. This process is informed and framed by three distinct sets of literature. Firstly, the discussion on situated learning provides an overall frame in which to analyse this process. The second is the literature on the work practices of the development workers and missionaries in the field. The literature above has established that missionaries are important development actors despite their colonial legacy and the negative opinion of missionaries within development circles. The work practice literature helps to identify a number of components that combine to make up a sub-frame for examining the working lives of the Irish development workers and missionaries. The frame that can be derived from the literature is as follows: An important element that has to be taken into consideration when analysing the process of learning through practice for the Irish development workers and missionaries, is their entry into the field. The development practice literature and the literature on the development-religion nexus makes the case that the motivations and beliefs of these practitioners need to be investigated. Smith (2017) believes a better understanding of the work of missionaries is achieved when we combine research on religion with development, because this link raises the question how do development actors, missionary and development worker, apply their beliefs and values to development programs? The situated learning literature draws attention, to learning through practice. The literature on the practitioner levels identifies the characteristic and work practices of missionaries and development workers. Therefore, learning about development comes from being engaged in the practice of development because knowledge does not "... act separately from engagement in practice" (Holland and Lave, 2009, p.2). The literature on the practitioner examines the levels of mobility and the career structures of these workers. It is important, therefore, to examine the careers of the Irish development

workers and missionaries in order to see how their knowledge is shaped by the multiplicity of these experiences. The third set of literature that complements the situated learning literature is the work of Sayer (2011), which draws attention to how the social world provides the setting in which people make evaluative judgements. Smith (2017) argues that paying attention to the sacred influences (beliefs and values) expands the reflective space for examining the interaction between beliefs and practices. The reflective element is the final aspect of the process of learning that is explored. This is the degree to which people reflect and the extent to which these reflections change their practices and shape their thinking. Chapters Five and Six will employ this frame when analyzing the work and context of these experiences.

### 3.1 Introduction

This research investigates the development ideas and discourses of Irish development workers. The research makes two major contributions. First, it investigates the variety of development discourses held by development workers, including a deeper understanding of the themes linked together within those discourses and the ethical and political dispositions involved. Second, it investigates why particular development workers come to adopt particular discourses of development, through an analysis of their varying motivations and entry to the field, their work situations, their place in local communities and social relations, and their own reflexive agency. This chapter outlines the research methodology adopted to collect data on these development worker discourses and life histories and explains how this data was analysed to answer each of these key questions.

### 3.2 Overview of the Research Process

The main research method employed was the qualitative interview. Robson (2002, p. 271) notes that “qualitative interviews prove most appropriate in cases where a study focuses on the meaning of a particular phenomenon to participants”.

#### 3.2.1 Overview of Interviews

I interviewed a total of sixty people between 2006 and 2008, including both missionaries and development workers. Religious and civil society organisations are involved in administering the Irish State's development assistance programme. The Irish case is noted for the direct contact it has with developing countries. Irish missionaries are heavily involved in the provision of services in health and education and continue to play a key role in the Irish development field. These missionaries led the way and provided opportunities for Irish development workers to work overseas.

The majority of the interviews took place in Ireland. All the development workers had returned from their overseas experiences and some were working in the Irish development field the remainder were pursuing other careers. The religious were a mix of retired missionaries and those who were home on holidays. In addition to these missionaries, I

interviewed a total of eleven people in Peru, ten missionaries and one development worker. On this field trip I spent time visiting parishes and looking at the various development projects that were set up and operated by Irish missionaries. I also talked to the staff of these organisations to get an insight into their development activities. This gave me a good insight into development practice on the ground.

The strengths of these interviews were that they allowed me to gather in-depth information on their work and life experiences, such as the different jobs held and the changes they experienced over the course of their working lives. The interviews also allowed me to get a good insight into their own life experience overseas, their relations with the local communities and their perceptions of the lived experiences of the local people in the communities they served. However, there was always a danger of people not being able to recall historical information. Some of the older missionaries for example were not able to fully remember exact dates or chronology of their different jobs.

Some respondents found it difficult to articulate what their understanding of development was. This was particularly the case with some of the religious, although further probing yielded further information. Laura a religious sister for example found this question difficult to answer and said development is about people. I then asked her what she meant about development of people and she responded it is "... about developing people, giving them opportunities to grow". Another area some of the missionaries found difficult to articulate was their definition of mission.

A weakness of these interviews is the danger that respondents might not open up and talk freely. For the most part my interviewees talked freely about their experiences. The religious and in particular the sisters opened up about their perceived role within the Catholic church. As the interviews proceeded, I was able to build up trust with the respondents. The questions about the sisters' role within the church came after I asked them about their understanding of mission late on in the interviews. At this stage in the interviews, I had built up a rapport and they were comfortable talking about their work and life on the missions.

### 3.2.2 On Researching 'Others'

Woodward (2008) describes the dilemmas of the insider/outsider dichotomy. She maintains that this dichotomy illustrates the tension "between objectivity and subjectivity"(2008, p.17). Insider participation, according to Woodward (2008, p.17), "may facilitate greater insights, the researcher could be implicated in excessive subjectivity and in privileging one position". Woodward (2008) argues, however, that "the research process can never be totally 'inside' or completely 'outside', but involves an interrogation of situatedness and how 'being inside' relates to lived bodies and their practices and experiences" (Woodward, 2008, p.17).

I faced the challenge of being an outsider in my interviews with the missionaries and development workers as I have never been a development worker. A boundary I had to cross was having no experience as a development worker. Even though I was unfamiliar with the technical language of development I was prepared through my research on development theories and the various discourses of development which assisted me in the interviews. I had travelled to Latin America in the past, where I had stayed with missionaries and had seen the work of these missionaries. I mentioned this when conducting the interviews and this helped to break down the boundaries. I have familial connections with missionaries and this helped and, in a sense, this made me less of an outsider. The majority of my interviewees were interviewed in Ireland about their experiences overseas. This raised the question of the reliability of the information given. The fieldwork included a trip to Peru where I conducted interviews and these interviews served to verify the type of information gathered from respondents interviewed in Ireland.

I was mindful of gender issues when approaching the interviews. I felt for example that I gained the trust of the religious sisters and that being an outsider helped in establishing this trust. Some of the sisters spoke freely about their role and position within the male dominated structural hierarchy of the institutional Catholic Church. As mentioned above familial connections to missionaries assisted in building trust with both missionary sisters and priests. In the course of the interviews, I built up a level of trust with the female development workers so much so that some talked about their workplace relationships and the inappropriate behaviour carried out by some of their male counterparts which they witnessed.

### **3.2.3 Participant Selection**

The sample selection technique I used was Snowballing. For Chomry (2008, p.824) the general objective of snowballing is "to identify members of the rare population. It involves identifying one or more members of a rare population and asking them to name other members of the same population. These additional persons are then contacted and asked to name additional persons in the rare population; and so forth. The process continues until an adequate sample size has been obtained or until no new names are elicited from the process". I had to use this option of recruiting respondents as there was no other means.

I used contacts that I had in missionary societies to set up initial interviews and these respondents approached and recruited other missionaries for me. I approached Comhlámh (the agency for returned development workers) who put me in contact with development workers who in turn recruited other interviewees for me. As an outsider to both groups this strategy proved useful, because it gave me an entree. These contacts made it easier to get people to agree to participate in my research. A problem with this type of sampling is that one is recruiting likeminded people and there is a danger that the sample might not be representative of the development worker and missionary groups.

Overall, I do not think this is an issue with the sample of people I have interviewed and are representative of the regions and areas of work undertaken by the main actors in Ireland's overseas development assistance programme. My sample was composed of frontline development workers who worked overseas. A proportion of these have gone on to work in the Irish NGO sector. I did not set out to just interview policy makes and those in management positions within the Irish field. Nobody that I approached refused to participate although there were two potential interviewees where we could not set up suitable dates and times for interviews.

### **3.2.4 Profile of the Development Workers and Missionaries in my sample**

I interviewed a varied grouping within the Irish case of development workers. There are two distinct groups of actors: missionaries and development workers, who are attached to a variety of organisations, such as missionary societies, volunteer sending

organisations and Irish development NGOs. Within these two groups, I interviewed male and female workers who are working in or have worked in either Africa or Latin America. The gender breakdown is shown in Table 3.1 below. Overall, there are near equal numbers of males and females, however there are gender imbalances in the missionary samples with more males in Latin America and more females in the African sample. In line with international experience where there is little available data on the gender composition of volunteers and staff in aid agencies (Roth, 2015), there is similarly no data on the gender breakdown of volunteers sent by the Irish organisations. The majority (25 of the 28) of the development workers started their development work as volunteers.

**Table 3.1 Gender Breakdown of the Sample**

	Africa		Latin America		Total
	Development Worker	Missionary	Development Worker	Missionary	
<b>Female</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>60</b>

I interviewed more Latin America based missionary priests compared with sisters. Amongst the Africa based religious I interviewed more religious sisters compared with priests. The regional locations of Africa and Latin America allow for comparisons of development practices and thinking in different cultural, social and political contexts. Issues such as poverty, poor health and education systems and corruption are similar across these regions. Notwithstanding the differences referred to above this comparative approach is important for identifying and verifying common themes across all groups of missionaries and development workers. My sample contained thirty-two people who were African-based, twenty-two who were Latin American-based and ten people who spent time in both locations. The over- representation of the African-based interviewees is due to the nature of the Irish development field where African countries account for the majority of Ireland's overseas development assistance.

The occupational specialisations are principally in the areas of: education; health and community development and these are set out in Table 3.2 below. The high numbers of interviewees working in health reflects the work areas of the NGOs as highlighted in chapter one above.

**Table 3.2 Work Areas of Irish Development Workers and Missionaries**

<b>Occupational area</b>	<b>Development Workers</b>	<b>Missionaries</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Community Development</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>NGO work / Development Professional</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Priest unspecified occupation</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>60</b>

Table 3.3 below gives a regional breakdown for the occupational areas worked in. Health and education figure prominently in the occupations of the African based respondents. There are very few Africa based priests who have no occupational specialism. This contrasts with the majority of the Latin America based priests having no occupational specialism. Community development figures more prominently in the work in Latin America.

**Table 3.3 Regional Breakdown for the Occupational Areas Worked In.**

	<b>Africa</b>		<b>Latin America</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Development Worker</b>	<b>Missionary</b>	<b>Development Worker</b>	<b>Missionary</b>	
<b>Community Development</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>NGO work / Development Professional</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Health</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Priest unspecified</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>60</b>

There are generational differences across my Sample. There is one cohort of elderly and retired missionaries whose average age is 75. The remainder of the missionaries have an average age of 63. The development workers are a much younger age grouping compared with the missionaries and these have an average age of 38.



### 3.2.5 Interview Procedures

I received ethical approval from the ethics committee in NUI Maynooth to carry out in-depth interviews. Each respondent had to sign a consent form stating they agreed with their interview being used as part of my research. The respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

In total sixty interviews were conducted. The interviews were typically between one and a half hours and two hours in length. The missionary interviews took place in the convents and the religious houses. The majority of development worker interviews took place in cafes where there was the challenge of noise, the rest of interviews took place in their offices.

In order to preserve anonymity, I have used pseudonyms for all my respondents. Interviews were transcribed in full and the interview transcripts were then analysed using MAXQDA.

These interviews were conducted employing a semi-structured questionnaire. The broad topics and themes explored were as follows:

- 1 Interviewee motivations for engaging in missionary or development work;
- 2 A description of their day-to-day work situations in development, including the challenges they faced in their work. The interviews focused on the workplace relations and dealings these workers had with various organisation both state and civil society. The interviews explored the changes in the nature of the work and the approach;
- 3 A descriptive account of their life experiences of living in developing countries. The challenges of adjusting to life in developing countries were also explored. This section also looked at the relationship's interviewees had with local people and their involvement with the local community. This section also sought the views of the respondents on what life was like for people in these countries and what the interviewees saw as the main issues facing developing countries;
- 4 The interviews also examined how the interviewees defined development. I asked the interviewees how they would define development and then probed further about they meant about for example the development of the person. I also asked them if there were any particular aspects that need to be taken into consideration when thinking about development.

### 3.3 Analytical and Interpretive approach

"The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world" (Merriam, 2002, p. 1). An interpretive qualitative approach for Merriam (2002, p. 4) is "learning how individuals experience and interact with their social world, and the meaning it has for them". According to Merriam (2002, p. 5) researchers "strive to understand the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experiences; that is, how do people make sense of their experience. In conducting "a basic qualitative study you seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved, or a combination of these" (Merriam (2002, p. 1). Qualitative research, according to Clissett (2008, p. 100), is "used to examine human experience, perceptions, motivations and behaviours". The phenomenon under study in my research is the development understanding of Irish development workers and missionaries. I am striving to understand how development workers make sense of their experiences in development and linked to this are their motivations, behaviours and perceptions. The subject is suitable for interviews because it firstly deals with meanings and secondly adopts a life history or biographical approach to understanding the formation of their development discourses.

The Semi structured interviews allowed interviewees to identify their own meanings of development.

There are three main analytical elements to my approach:

#### **(a) Formal coding process**

These interviews went through a formal process of coding and identification of development discourses which involved a number of distinct stages.

1. Coding the interview text to identify development ideas, which consist of for example: development of the person, development as enlarging choices, to fulfill potential, empowerment, capacity building, health, education, rights, justice and equality.
  - a) The purpose was to identify the range of ideas of development used and coding identified 30 distinct ideas of development
  - b) The approach to coding and identifying the ideas was based on codes derived largely from concepts in the development literature but identifiable in the interviewees' own language
  - c) This also allowed me to identify the distribution of ideas across region and type of development worker

2. The categorization of these development ideas into themes, which consist of: secular and religious definitions of personal development; dimensions of well-being interpreted as functionings and capabilities; participation; critiques of development practice (Micro structural constraints); geopolitics (Macro policy critiques); politics and political values.
  - a) The purpose is to understand the key ideas of development that underpin individual concepts; this is a type of meta-coding based on the dominant ideas of development being used by the development workers
  - b) I used Robeyns (2017) modular approach to the capability framework of development to get from the thirty individual ideas mentioned to the seven themes. I then mapped these seven themes on to five capabilities themes derived from Robeyns (2017) framework. Robeyns' multidimensional approach allows us to capture the diversity of ideas within the realm of a capabilities frame. This also permits us to understand how these themes are understood and constructed.
  - c) I adopted a frame approach to group the concepts of development into the themes. Frame analysis (Oliver and Johnston 2005) provides a way to examine common understandings of events shared by individuals. For my purpose, frames are "interpretive schemata that simplify and condense the 'world out there' (Benford and Snow, 1992, p.137). In essence, I am condensing the range of ideas of Irish development workers and missionaries. Robeyns' (2017) multidimensional view allows us to examine the interconnections between theory and practice within the realms of a capability approach. Her approach permits us to consider both reflexive and instrumental forms of knowledge and how they inform each other. This is an alternative approach as the development literature tends to see theory and practice as running in parallel lines.
  - d) I inputted the data into SPSS which facilitated the grouping of the respondents into the themes that clustered together. SPSS also allowed me to examine the differences across groups and regions.
3. Identification of Development Discourses; based on two elements:
  - 1. The combination of the various themes as noted above
  - 2. How these cluster together for particular development workers (so the clusters of workers become a way of identifying the development discourses)
  - The purpose is to identify groups of development workers who share similar combinations of development themes, forming a development discourse; The grouping

of the respondents resulted in six distinct development discourses emerging, with clusters of workers identified who adopted these discourses.

### **(b) Interpretive Analysis**

In addition to this formal process, there was an ongoing process of interpretive analysis, reflecting the foundations of the research process in the understandings of the development workers themselves

- *Qualitative analysis* of the discourses; the purpose is to look at how each narrative handles core tensions in development. I used the post-colonial critical analytical frame in conjunction with the capabilities approach to discuss these tensions (Section 4.4 chapter four)

In chapters five and six I did a Life History analysis of the interviews to explore why workers in each of the seven groups end up with that discourse, using the situated learning frame examining each of the following:

- a. Their origins and motivations for becoming development workers
- b. Their work practices, including changing work roles, careers and workplace relations
- c. Their local communities and social relations
- d. The degree to which they engage in reflexivity, agency, change

I went through the interviews to identify the four elements in their life history and examined how they related to their discourses of development.

### **(c) Comparative analysis**

Karl W Deutsch (1996) points out, that to an extent, human learning occurs through comparison. According to Deutsch (1996, p.3), the first four steps in the learning process of science entail curiosity, recognition of patterns, counting cases of recognition, and perceptions of similarities and hence general classes. My research stemmed from contacts with missionaries and also trips to Peru. I became curious about the work and lives of missionaries. I recognised that there was a development aspect to the work that they were engaged in. This led me to delve deeper into this development role and to look at other groups of people namely development workers who worked in this field. I then wanted to investigate and identify the general understanding of development for these groups of Irish people. I was also interested to see how these concepts are formed and how they are shaped by the context of their work and life environments.

Ragin (1997) notes that researchers are sometimes interested in identifying commonalities across comparable cases. Kohn (1996) favours the comparative approach

for two principal reasons. First, cross-national comparative research strengthens the case for generalising findings: “cross-national research is valuable, even indispensable, for establishing the generality of findings and the validity of interpretations derived from single-nation studies” (Kohn, 1996, p.28). The regional and occupational comparisons used in my study help to clarify both the concepts and practices of development. Kohn further argues that cross-national research is “equally valuable, perhaps even more valuable, in forcing us to revise our interpretations to take account of cross-national differences and inconsistencies that could never be uncovered in single-nation research” (Kohn, 1996, p.28).

My research contains a comparative analysis of two distinct groups of actors: development workers and missionaries. There is a further comparative element in that these actors are working in or have worked in either Africa or Latin America. These regional locations allow for comparisons of development practices and thinking in different cultural, social and political contexts. Notwithstanding the differences referred to above this comparative approach is important for identifying and verifying common themes across all groups of development workers.

### **3.4 Studying Cases**

Finally, it is worth noting that this study is in its broadest sense a case study of development discourse in a national community of development workers. The case study "allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events" Yin (2004, p.4) cited by Onatu (2013). For Merriam (2002, p.8) a case study is "an intensive description and analysis of a phenomenon or social unit such as an individual, group, institution, or community". Brown (2008) cites the work of Yin (2005, p. xiv) where case studies "can provide both descriptive richness and analytic insight into people, events and passions as played out in real-life environments". Brown (2008, p.7) draws attention to the work of Stake (2005), who believed the context of a case to be important. The researcher should take into consideration the social, economic, political, ethical, or aesthetic aspects of cases.

Brown (2008) cites Stake (2005, p.450) where he states that the researcher "must be ever-reflective, considering impressions, and deliberating on materials and recollections. The researcher digs into meanings, working to relate them to contexts and experience. In each

instance the work is reflective” (p. 450). Flyvbjerg (2006, p.5) argues that "context-dependent knowledge and experience are at the very heart of expert activity. Such knowledge and expertise also lie at the centre of the case study as a research and teaching method". An advantage of case study research for Collier (1998, p.5) is that the researcher knows their case which helps them avoid the problems of validity.

Can the findings of this Irish case be extended to other groups of development workers? A study of the development understanding of Irish development workers and missionaries is useful in and of itself. As noted above there has been little research conducted on development workers. Nonetheless, the question arises as to whether specific cases, and the research findings from these, may be generalised to other contexts. Walton (1992) argues in favour of generalising from cases and argues that "when researchers speak of a 'case' rather than a circumstance, instance, or event, they invest in the study of a particular social setting with some sense of generality. An 'instance' is just that and goes no further. A 'case' implies a family; it alleges that the particular case is a case of something else. Implicit in the idea of a case is a claim” (Walton, 1992: 121). Flyvbjerg (2006) believes that there are a number of misunderstandings about case study research. One such misunderstanding is that one cannot generalise from a single case.

The reflective nature of case study research also features in the work of Burawoy (1998) who is concerned with generalising from cases. Burawoy (1998) argues for a reflexive model of science which "starts out from dialogue, virtual or real, between observer and participants, embeds such dialogue within a second dialogue between local processes and extralocal forces that in turn can only be comprehended through a third, expanding dialogue of theory with itself” (Burawoy, 1998, p. 5). The extended case method, according to Burawoy (1998, p.5), "applies reflexive science to ethnography in order to extract the general from the unique, to move from the micro to the macro, and to connect the present to the past in the anticipation of the future, all by building on pre-existing theory". The reflexive approach is also favoured by Ragin (1987) who maintains that “most hypotheses and concepts are refined, often reformulated, after the data have been collected and analysed.” (Ragin, 1987, p.164). My research is a case study of the development discourses of Irish Missionaries and development workers.

### 3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has set out both the rationale for and the research design employed in this thesis. The chapter gave an overview of the research process including participant selection, the profile of the sample and the interview procedures. The chapter also set out the analytical and interpretive approach adopted in the analysis of the semi structured interviews.

Firstly, the chapter described the coding of the data and the identification of the range of ideas of development used. There followed a description of the procedure used in the categorization of these development ideas into themes. This process used Robeyns (2017) capability modular approach. The procedure for the identification of development discourses was also set out and this involved identifying the combination of the various themes and how they cluster together for particular development workers. Another step in the analysis of the development narratives set out in this chapter was the identification of the discourses through these narratives. The objective is to identify the internal structure of the discourses and how they combine the various themes.

The chapter also set out the ongoing process of interpretive analysis in the thesis such as the frame employed in chapters five and six for understanding the process of situated learning through which these discourses are generated. This frame includes: their entry and motivations for becoming development workers; their work practices, including changing work roles, careers and workplace relations; their local communities and social relations; the degree to which they engage in reflexivity, agency and change.

### 4.1 Introduction

Given the controversies over the nature of ‘development’, how do Irish missionaries and development workers conceptualise ‘development’ in their understanding of their own practises and biographies? What are the varieties of those views, and the dimensions along which they vary? The aim of this chapter is to examine the development narratives of Irish development workers and missionaries.

As outlined in Chapter Two, these ‘discourses of development’ are themselves forms of ‘resolution’ of some core tensions in development work – including tensions from the micro level (altruism, paternalism and egalitarianism); the meso organisational level (capacity building and empowerment versus assumed professional or expert knowledge); the macro level (development versus globalisation of markets, religious versus secular) and across the various levels of action (personal versus political). This chapter will identify and analyse the range of ideas about development used by these development workers, explore how these ideas cluster together in to broader development themes and how these themes themselves are configured together in different ways to form seven dominant discourses of development.

The chapter develops the analysis in three main steps. Firstly, I will identify the key development themes used by development workers. This involves describing the range of development ideas mentioned by the respondents in my study and then categorising these ideas into a number of themes. The reason for categorising the ideas mentioned is to identify the normative frames and different forms of knowledge, whether reflexive (concerned with values and ends) and / or instrumental (focused on the means to achieve given ends) that exist within these dense descriptive narratives. This process of categorisation is informed by the development and religious literature outlined in Chapter Two in two ways. The first link is empirical as the development workers themselves are very aware of this field of literature and the debates it has generated and often make direct use of ideas from them – the development literature is therefore reflected in the kinds of ideas that development workers mention. However, there is also an analytical link as I directly refer to the literature in my own analysis of how the specific ideas are linked



together, relying in particular on Robeyns' analysis of the various capabilities discussed in the development literature as a way of identifying the themes.

Secondly, I look beneath the coding of the development ideas and themes and examine how the themes are narrated by the development workers and missionaries themselves, carrying out a qualitative analysis of these varying narratives and the notions of development that they portray.

However, these themes combine in different ways to form discourses of development held by different development workers. Thirdly, therefore, the chapter explores how these themes are clustered together within the narratives of each development worker to form an overall 'discourse of development' from these various ideas and interlocking narratives. It also allows me to identify which development workers mention particular themes while ignoring others. This allows me both to link the development themes together into discourses of development and to analyse how these discourses are, in turn, linked to different groups in my sample. This then allows me to examine the factors affecting both missionaries and development workers including divergences between regions (Africa and Latin America) and across the various occupations such as education, health and community development. The chapter concludes by turning once more to a qualitative analysis of the interviews with development workers to analyse how these different overall discourses of development emphasise particular tensions in the development project, and downplay others.

#### **4.2 The Development Ideas and Narratives of Irish Development Workers and Missionaries**

As outlined in Chapter Three this thesis is a qualitative study and, as such, the development narratives are an in depth, descriptive account of the Irish development workers and missionary understanding of development. I will firstly tabulate the main development ideas mentioned in these descriptive narratives. I will then categorise these ideas into development themes based on the human development and capabilities' approach to development. Following on from this I will examine how these themes are distributed across the different groups of respondents in my sample. In doing so my aim is to lay a foundation for an analysis of the differences in how the different groups conceptualise and speak about development.

Table 4.1 below is the tabulation of the main development ideas in the descriptive narratives. This table gives a summary of the top 30 development ideas mentioned by the people I interviewed. The table records the differences between missionary and development workers and also displays the regional comparisons. It reveals an overall development narrative that is multidimensional, where constructive and critical ideas stand side by side. However, human development themes dominate. A feature of the narratives highlighted by the range of ideas is that they contain what Burawoy (2004) defines as reflexive knowledge, which is a focus on values and ends. The table illustrates the wide range of ideas mentioned from development of the person, participation to basic needs and politics. Religious values are at the heart of the religious development workers' (missionary) development narratives. The table also shows that there is a hierarchy in the ideas mentioned with, for example, ideas related to personal development being mentioned more frequently than political ideas. It is clear that there is a normative and ethical basis to these ideas, where people are clearly the ends of development. The ideas are concerned with people's well-being and the factors that militate against it. In the hierarchy of ideas, development of the person is mentioned by 90% of the respondents. Over two thirds of my interviewees mentioned issues such as education, empowerment, capacity building and participation. Ideas concerned with poverty and corruption are mentioned by over half of all respondents. Basic needs and health figure in the narratives of nearly half of all interviewees. Issues related to politics, rights and justice feature in the narratives of about a third of the respondents. However, these issues are prominent in the narratives of those respondents based in Latin America.

Table 4.1 also highlights the distinct differences in the ideas between missionaries and development workers. There is a similar distribution in the hierarchy of ideas for both groups, with personal development, participation and education mentioned by a majority in each group. Education is mentioned by fewer missionaries than development workers. Ideas such as formation, spirituality and dignity of the person figure prominently in the missionary narratives. These ideas do not figure in the narratives of the development workers. However, development in terms of people living lives the way they want to and capacity building feature more prominently in the narratives of the development workers. This is indicative of a religious-secular divide in the development thinking of the two groups. Themes such as equality and justice are a stronger feature of the narrative of missionaries compared with development workers. Development workers and missionaries also raise issues about the general practice of development and question the

role of donors and international organisations. Again, this figures more prominently in the ideas of development workers compared with missionaries. Health and basic needs also figure prominently in these narratives.

Health, education and capacity building are more present in the narratives of the African-based respondents compared with those based in Latin America. On the other hand, issues connected to politics, rights and justice feature more strongly in the narratives of the Latin America-based respondents.

**Table 4.1 Top 30 Development Ideas Mentioned for Total Sample, by Group (Missionary & Development Workers and by Region (Africa & Latin America)**

Ideas mentioned	Group			Region	
	Total Sample %	Development Worker %	Missionaries %	Africa based respondents %	Latin American respondents %
Development of Person	90%	79%	<b>100%</b>	88%	<b>93%</b>
Participation	75%	<b>79%</b>	72%	61%	<b>93%</b>
Education	68%	54%	<b>81%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>56%</b>
Empowerment	67%	61%	<b>72%</b>	67%	<b>67%</b>
Poverty	65%	57%	<b>72%</b>	64%	<b>67%</b>
Community Focus	57%	57%	56%	39%	<b>78%</b>
Health	55%	<b>61%</b>	53%	70%	<b>41%</b>
Corruption	53%	46%	<b>59%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>29%</b>
Critique IMF / World Bank	45%	<b>61%</b>	31%	36%	<b>56%</b>
Spiritual	45%	4%*	<b>81%</b>	39%	<b>52%</b>
Basic Needs	43%	39%	<b>47%</b>	39%	<b>48%</b>
Capacity Building	43%	<b>54%</b>	34%	<b>55%</b>	<b>30%</b>
HIV / Aids	42%	<b>50%</b>	34%	<b>67%</b>	<b>11%</b>
Listening	40%	<b>42%</b>	37%	30%	<b>48%</b>
Rights	40%	36%	<b>44%</b>	18%	<b>67%</b>
Dignity of Person	38%	**	<b>72%</b>	30%	<b>48%</b>
Fulfil Potential	38%	<b>39%</b>	37%	36%	<b>41%</b>
Equality	37%	29%	<b>44%</b>	18%	<b>59%</b>
Formation of Person	35%	**	<b>66%</b>	30%	<b>41%</b>
Imposed Solutions	35%	<b>43%</b>	28%	<b>36%</b>	<b>33%</b>
Donors	33%	<b>36%</b>	31%	27%	<b>41%</b>
Live Lives the Way They Want to	33%	<b>54%</b>	16%	30%	<b>37%</b>
Justice	32%	25%	<b>38%</b>	9%	<b>59%</b>
Self-Belief – Self-esteem	28%	**	<b>53%</b>	31%	<b>37%</b>
Politics - Democracy	28%	21%	<b>34%</b>	12%	<b>44%</b>
Geopolitics	27%	<b>46%</b>	9%	<b>30%</b>	<b>22%</b>
Fair Trade	27%	<b>50%</b>	6%	21%	<b>33%</b>
Critique of Practice	27%	14%	<b>37%</b>	24%	<b>30%</b>
Language / Jargon	27%	<b>39%</b>	16%	<b>30%</b>	<b>22%</b>
Debt	<b>23%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>33%</b>

\* I respondent \*\* Not mentioned by development workers

The development ideas listed are a broad canvas, a multi-dimensional set of ideas, which reflect the development literature as outlined in Chapter Two. The next task is to see whether there are broader development themes underpinning this broad canvas of ideas. The process of categorisation is informed by the development and religious literature that is discussed in Chapter Two.

At first glance, and relating these ideas to the development literature, seven themes emerge. These are: basic needs (dimensions of well-being), Secular definitions of personal development, religious definitions of personal development, participation, criticisms of development practice, macro geopolitical criticisms and references to political values.

The first theme brings together all the ideas on the list related to the well-being and quality of life of the person. Included here are references to health, poverty, and material well-being and food security. These ideas tally with the evaluative dimensions that Alkire (2010) and Stiglitz, Sen, Fitoussi (2009) consider important for shaping people's well-being. The next two themes capture the range of definitions that relate to the development of the person. The themes reflect a view of development where people are placed at the centre and where is an abiding concern for their well-being. However, the development of the person has secular and religious definitions. The secular development versions are rooted in the capabilities approach; however, this is narrated in different ways such as fulfilling potential or availing of opportunities. The literature in Chapter Two made the case for the link between religious values and human development. These religious values crop up in the definitions of personal development. However, they are not solely focused on spiritual well-being as there are other dimensions such as self-esteem and the dignity of the person. Themes related to participation are mentioned by three quarters of all my respondents and the fourth theme summarises these references. The fifth theme brings together all the ideas which criticise development practice and these include concerns about the design of projects, the role of donors and the imposition of solutions on people and communities. Another set of criticisms in the narratives relates to macro global issues and these form theme six. The ideas in this group concern: policy issues relating to fair trade, aid and debt. The final theme brings together ideas related to politics and political values mentioned by the Irish development workers values such as rights, justice and democracy. These are linked to themes in the literature which are seen as important elements in a capabilities approach. Such themes include political voice and

governance (Stiglitz, Sen, Fitoussi, 2009, p.15) and political freedom (Alkire, 2000). The rights-based approach, seen as an adjunct to human development, added political values such as rights to the agenda. The theme and the ideas comprised within these groups are listed in Table 4.2 below.

Having identified the broad themes, the next task is to map these groups onto a capabilities' framework, As outlined in Chapter 2, I do this by applying Robeyns' (2017) modular approach. Her multidimensional view allows us to examine the interconnections between those ideas related to reflexive (values and ends) and instrumental (means) forms of knowledge and how they inform each other. The capabilities approach will enable further categorisation, while also conceptualising and analysing the ideas and narratives of the Irish missionaries and development workers. Using this framework, the themes can be combined into main five groups (see Table 4.2 below). The three personal development groups can be analysed under the heading of people as the ends of development. The dimensions of well-being can be analysed in terms of functionings and capabilities, while the ideas related to participation can be thought of as participative capabilities, critiques of practice can be conceptualised as micro conversion factors and / or structural constraints. The last two themes, macro policy critiques and ideas related to politics and political values, can be conceptualised as macro conversion factors and / or structural constraints.

How will the capabilities approach assist in the analysis of the development narratives of the Irish development workers and missionaries? Robeyns' (2017) model was used to assist in the grouping of ideas into themes. The rationale for using her model is, firstly, that it directs us to specify the ends of development but allows space to consider how the means impact upon these ends. It also allows us to incorporate critical accounts at the level of practice such as the failures of development projects and questioning of the roles and activities of development actors. Her frame allows us to incorporate critical voices surrounding policies which emanated from theoretical perspectives. The account allows for additional perspectives to be added. In the case of this thesis one added feature is religious beliefs and practices. This frame allows us to delve further into questions and puzzles associated with the ideas that make up these themes.

**Table 4.2 Themes in the Development Narratives of Irish Missionaries and Development Workers**

<b>Ideas Mentioned</b>	<b>Human Development / Capabilities Themes (from Robeyns)</b>	<b>Themes</b>
Education, Health Basic needs, Food security Poverty Spiritual	<b>Functionings and capabilities</b>	<b>Basic Needs (Dimensions of well-being)</b>
Live lives the way they want to live, Fulfil potential, Avail of opportunities Empowerment, Capacity building	<b>People as the ends of development</b>	<b>Secular development narratives</b>
Spiritual Formation of person  Dignity of person  Esteem, self worth		<b>Religious narratives</b>
Participation  Listening,  Community	<b>Participative capabilities</b>	<b>Participation</b>
Criticisms of development practice and projects Donors, Imposed solutions Jargon	<b>Micro Structural constraints / conversion factors</b>	<b>Critiques of Practice</b>
Fair Trade Aid / Tied Aid Debt, Structural adjustment IMF / World bank	<b>constraints / conversion factors</b>	<b>Geopolitical Critique</b>
Equality, Justice, Rights Democracy,		<b>Political Values</b>

The first capabilities theme contains various ideas related to the well-being of the person. However, from a capabilities point of view are these conceptualised by the Irish development workers in terms of functionings and capabilities? Is health defined in terms of a functioning i.e., being healthy? Or is it described in terms of a capability i.e., people having the opportunity to be healthy?

In the second theme people are considered to be the ends of development, but how is this narrated by the Irish development workers? How are the variety of ideas mentioned

narrated? Are, for example, capacity building and empowerment described as ends or are they treated as a means of attaining personal development? Similarly, in the religious personal development theme is formation an end or a means?

The third participative capabilities theme centres on the participative narratives of the development workers. A capabilities' reading draws attention to the extent to which choice is embedded in these narratives. Do the descriptions include participatory capabilities which, according to Frediani (2015), are the freedoms of individuals or groups to achieve dimensions of participation?

The ideas in the fourth theme are linked to what Robeyns (2017) calls the social and environmental conversion factors and structural constraints. Failures in development practice impinge upon how individuals and communities are able to convert resources into functionings and capabilities. These failures in development practice are also indicative of the criticisms put forward by post-colonial theorists. These failures are due to a lack of real participation and the imposition of external constructed Eurocentric project and knowledge. The purpose of drawing attention to these criticisms and what I have termed 'micro structural constraints' is to focus on how they affect the quality of life and well-being of individuals and communities.

The broad macro political issues in the fifth theme are linked to what Robeyns (2017) calls the social conversion factors, where local and international policies have an effect on people's ability to convert resources into functionings. The broad political themes also highlight the post-colonial critiques of development and in particular the structural issues of injustice and inequalities that have been handed down since colonial times.

### **4.3 Discourses of Development**

We have identified and analysed a number of varying development themes. However, these themes are often discussed together, clustering in different combinations and in different ways to form missionary and development workers' overall discourses of development. By discourses, I mean an overall way of conceptualising and talking about development that combines particular themes and sidelines others and forms an overarching structure of meaning through which development workers perceive their development work. The aim of identifying the different groups of respondents with



similar views is to identify the development discourse of these groups, because: “Discourse usually denotes a structure in the way reality (or a certain aspect of it) is constructed through language” (Ziai, 2016, p.55). Examining the discourse reveals the set of ideas, concepts and categories that confer meaning on to a phenomenon (Hajer, 1995). The discourses of the respondents in each of these groups informs us "about their preoccupations, their hopes and values" (Cornwall & Brock, 2005, p.16).

This section analyses those discourses – firstly in terms of how the themes cluster together to form seven different discourses of development (or five but with religious and secular versions of two of them) and then in terms of how those discourses emphasise or minimise particular tensions in the development project (as discussed in Chapter Two). The discourses of development may also contain incoherencies and certain contradictions and these will be examined below.

The seven different groups of discourses of development were constructed as follows: The narratives in the interviews for each respondent were classified into the themes derived from Robeyns’ capability frame as outlined above and displayed in table 4.2 above. I used this to identify particular groups of respondents who shared the same range of ideas and themes of development. The analysis of these groups will illustrate or reveal the interweaving and overlapping of ideas and themes within the groups. This will help to explain why each group represents a particular discourse of development. The analysis of these discourses using the interview data will help to show how they manage tensions in the development project by either attempting to resolve the tensions or by de-emphasising them.

The seven discourses are:

- Personal
- Personal and Practice (there are missionary and development worker versions)
- Geopolitics
- Political Values
- Combined Geopolitics and Political Values (there are missionary and development worker versions).

The first three discourses are focused on the personal and practice aspects of development and include themes such as: Personal development and well-being; participative frames; critique of practice The second four discourses are concerned more with the macro

political themes and include ideas such as: fair trade, criticism of IMF/ World Bank policies, Justice, rights and democracy.

Tables 4.3 to 4.5 below show the distribution of the discourses and their associated themes across my interviewees. The tables serve two purposes. First, they are the basis of how I define and identify the discourses using the varying combinations of themes (explained above and in Chapter 3). Second, they allow me to further illustrate the group and regional differences already highlighted in Table 4.1 above.

The majority in the first group are retired missionaries, who were based in Africa and first went overseas in the 1950s and 1960s prior to Vatican II when traditional Catholic values and practices held sway. Two respondents in this group differ from the majority profile, the first being an Africa based development worker who worked in the medical field and the second a missionary located in Latin America. The development debate in vogue at the time the majority entered the field was modernisation theory. The discourse of the respondents in the personal development group has a limited range of themes centred on personal development and key dimensions of well-being, which are described in terms of basic human needs. What is missing from the discourse is a critical reflections of development practice and policies. The available set of ideas and core modules in Robeyns' (2017) frame used by the respondents in this groups are: definite statements about the ends of development and a distinction between the means and ends, the dimensions of well-being are narrated in terms of functionings and capabilities. However, these accounts raise issues of coherence between anti-paternalism and paternalism. As a consequence, this raises the question, are the narratives prescriptive? These tensions will be explored further below. There is a differentiation between empowerment and altruism in the narratives. In general, empowerment is described as a means to personal development. For the most part the religious and secular definitions of personal development are separate. The religious dimension in the missionary discourses focuses on the spiritual well-being of the person.

There are two groups of respondents who share a personal practice development discourse. The first group are development workers and the second are missionaries who include religious themes in their discourses. This discourse includes: personal development, dimensions of well-being narrated as functionings and capabilities, participative capabilities and criticisms of development practice. The dimensions of

well-being such as health are seen as achievements (functionings) rather than capabilities. Participation is described as a means to personal development. This group critique development practice which is described in terms of how these failures impinge on people's quality of life and their ability to convert resources into functionings. These practice failures can be described as structural constraints as per Robeyns' (2017) frame. The case can be made that these discourses represent a limited post-colonial reading of development focusing on the practice aspect of development and a concern for listening to the 'subaltern voices' and shunning imposed solutions. These discourses, however, fail to take into consideration the broader political critiques that post-colonial theorists draw attention to. The discourses are indicative of missionaries and development workers who believe in an interventionist model of development tempered by participative practices.

The personal religious ideas which feature in the missionary discourses are: dignity of the person and formation. Rather than a tension between the religious and the human in the personal development narratives there is an interlinking between them. The majority of the missionaries with the personal practice discourse are a different generation from the first group. These went to Africa in the 1970s post Vatican II and are still working in the field. Even though modernization and basic needs were the main theoretical perspectives in vogue when they first went overseas, they continue to work in a field of changing development perspectives.

There is an equal split of development workers between those based in Africa and those based in Latin America and they have worked in a variety of occupations. This group is a generation who went overseas in the late 1980s and 1990s. Basic needs and human development alongside post development and the emergence of neoliberalism were the main development frames

**Table 4.3 Personal and Practice Discourses of Development**

	Region	Pseudo Name	Gender	Occupation	Personal Development	Dimensions of well-being	Participation	Critique of Practice	Geo-political	Political Values
<b>Personal Discourse</b>	L. America	Eamon	Male	Priest no specialism	⊙					
	Africa	Seamus	Male	Priest no specialism	⊙	⊙				
	Africa	Paul	Male	Education	⊙	⊙				
	Africa	Joan	Female	Education	⊙	⊙				
	Africa	Mary	Female	Health	⊙	⊙				
	Africa	Patricia	Female	Health	⊙	⊙				
	Africa	Eileen	Female	Health	⊙	⊙				
	Africa	Cormac (Secular)	Male	Health	⊙	⊙				
<b>Missionary Personal Practice Discourse</b>	L. America	Ruth	Female	Health	⊙	⊙	⊙			
	Africa	Mark	Male	Community Development	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		
	Africa	John	Male	Priest no specialism	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		
	Africa	Jean	Female	Health	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		
	Africa	Breda	Female	Health	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		
	Africa	Helen	Female	Health	⊙	⊙		⊙		
	Africa	Annemarie	Female	Health	⊙	⊙		⊙		
	Africa	Pauline	Female	Health	⊙	⊙		⊙		
<b>Development worker Personal Practice Discourse</b>	Africa	Martha	Female	Education	⊙	⊙	⊙			
	Africa	Betty	Female	NGO staff / dev Professional	⊙	⊙	⊙			
	L. America	Robert	Male	NGO staff / dev Professional	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		
	L. America	Yvonne	Female	Community Development	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		

The next set of discourses take on a more macro political tone and these are set out in Tables 4.4 and 4.5 below. However, it must be noted that development workers do not have discourses which consist solely of political values and missionaries do not have discourses which include only the geopolitical. Table 4.4 sets out the geopolitical discourses and the political values discourses. The geopolitical discourses are the sole preserve of a group of development workers. This group is a younger cohort who went overseas in the 1990s and early 2000s. The majority of the respondents who share this discourse are based in Africa. The group also contains one development worker who is based in Latin America. Health and community development are the two biggest occupational groups. Half are still working in the development field and make up a more professionalised group. The discourses contain the main elements in Robeyns' 2017 capabilities frame such as: personal and practice ideas and themes and include definite statements about the ends of development and a distinction between the means and ends. What distinguishes these respondents from the other three groups is that they incorporate many of the criticisms put forward by the post-colonial theorists. These criticisms can be regarded as macro structural constraints, the broad international policies or geo-politics, that affect the well-being and people's quality of lives. They question the broad thrust of the Washington consensus and the role of the INGOs in development. The geopolitical themes of this group are interlinked with critiques of practice, that is most development workers that hold a geopolitical perspective also have a critique of practice but not a participative view. The inconsistencies that need to be explored when discussing these narratives are the tensions between 'othering' and participation, and between 'expert' knowledge (Western ideas or practices) and participation (listening and involving the 'subaltern').

The discourse of the political values group includes reflexive knowledge focusing on values alongside the instrumental aspects of development. What sets the discourse of this group apart from the other groups is that the emphasis is more on the structural constraints arising from national political processes and public policies. Here themes such as justice, equality, rights and democracy figure prominently. This is a group of missionaries who are for the most part based in Latin America. There is one missionary who is based in Africa. This group is mainly made up of priests who have no occupational specialism, with the rest working in education, health and community development. This is a generation of religious whose views have been shaped by Vatican II and liberation

theology in particular. The narratives show clear linkages between religious values and development. Again, the concerns of the post colonialists around injustice and inequality feature in the discourse of this group. Needless to say, there are inconsistencies in the discourses between 'othering' and participation.

**Table 4.4 Geopolitical and Political Values Discourses of Development**

	Region	Pseudo Name	Gender	Occupation	Personal Development	Dimensions of well-being	Participation	Critique of Practice	of	Geo-political	Political Values	
<b>Geopolitical Discourses</b>	Africa	<i>Connor</i>	Male	Health	⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙		
	Africa	<i>Brian</i>	Male	Health	⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙		
	Africa	<i>Brendan</i>	Male	Health	⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙		
	Africa	<i>Cathy</i>	Female	Health	⊙					⊙		
	Africa	Niall	Male	Health	⊙	⊙	⊙			⊙		
	Africa	Frances	Female	Education	⊙			⊙		⊙		
	Africa	Kate	Female	Education	⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙		
	Africa	Noel	Male	NGO staff	⊙	⊙					⊙	
	Africa	Marie	Female	NGO staff / devt Professional	⊙		⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙	
	Africa	<i>Catherine</i>	Female	Community development	⊙	⊙		⊙		⊙		
	L.America	Ronan	Male	Community Development		⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙		
<b>Political Values Discourses</b>	L.America	Martin	Male	Priest specialism	no	⊙	⊙	⊙			⊙	
	L.America	Tim	Male	Priest specialism	no	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	
	L.America	Chris	Male	Priest specialism	no	⊙	⊙	⊙			⊙	
	L.America	Paddy	Male	Priest specialism	no		⊙				⊙	
	L.America	Jim	Male	Priest specialism	no		⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	
	L.America	Luke	Male	Priest Education	-	⊙		⊙			⊙	
	L.America	Phil	Male	Education		⊙		⊙			⊙	
	Africa	Joe	Male	Education		⊙	⊙				⊙	
	L.America	Maria	Female	Education		⊙					⊙	
	L.America	Nora	Female	Health		⊙	⊙	⊙			⊙	
	L.America	Laura	Female	Community Development		⊙	⊙				⊙	

The final set of discourses are multidimensional and are a combination of geopolitics and political values. There are two different versions, one development worker and the other missionary. Table 4.5 below gives an overview of the ideas and themes mentioned by the respondents who share these discourses. The discourse of this group includes reflexive knowledge focusing on values and the instrumental aspects of development and features all the themes listed in Table 4.2 above. This discourse contains a wide range of Robeyns' (2017) capability modules: and includes references to personal development, functionings and capabilities and participation. Again, there is a clear focus on what the ends of development are. The tensions between paternalism and anti-paternalism, expert knowledge and participation feature in these narratives. These discourses reflect a broad range of the criticisms put forward by the post-colonial theorists as set out in chapter two. They draw attention to the political and economic structural constraints operating nationally and internationally. The narratives in this group illustrate the interconnectedness between the instrumental or practice elements and the macro political aspects of development, with for example geopolitics and political values interlinked with either participation or a critique of practice. This group consists of development workers who have worked in either Africa or Latin America. The main occupational groups amongst the development workers are NGO staff/development professionals and those involved in community development. This is younger generation of development workers who have been exposed to a wide range of ideas in the development debates.

The religious version contains the same range of political ideas and themes. Religious aspects of personal development are mentioned. Religious values are linked with political values such as justice and rights. The macro geopolitical and political values tend to be interlinked either with critique of practice or, sometimes, participation. This missionary group is based in Latin America with a majority of priests with no occupational specialism. This group of missionaries has been particularly influenced by Vatican II and liberation theology. Again, the discourses are reflexive and reflect the critical analysis articulated by the post-colonial theorists.



**Table 4.5: Combined Political Discourses of Development (Geopolitics and Political Values)**

	Region	Pseudo Name	Gender	Occupation	Personal Development	Dimensions of well-being	Participation	Critique of Practice	Geo-political	Political Values
<b>Development worker Discourses</b>	Africa	Steve	Male	NGO staff / dev Professional	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	Africa	Aidan	Male	NGO staff / dev Professional	⊙	⊙			⊙	⊙
	Africa	Liam	Male	NGO staff / dev Professional	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙
	Africa	Lucy	Female	Education	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	L. America	Brenda	Female	Education	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	L. America	Miriam	Female	Education	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	L. America	Larry	Male	NGO staff / devt Professional	⊙	⊙			⊙	⊙
	L. America	Julie	Female	Community Development	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	L. America	Fred	Male	Community Development	⊙		⊙		⊙	⊙
	L. America	Gerry	Male	Community Development	⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙
	L. America	Colin	Male	Community Development		⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙
<b>Missionary Discourses</b>	L. America	Eithne	Female	Health	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	L. America	James	Male	Priest specialism	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	L. America	Rory	Male	Priest specialism	⊙		⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙
	L. America	Eric	Male	Priest specialism	⊙	⊙	⊙		⊙	⊙
	L. America	Richard	Male	Community Development	⊙				⊙	⊙

#### 4.4 Discourses of Development and Tensions in the Development Project

The aim of this section of the chapter is to identify the linkages, coherencies and tensions within the discourses in each group and in the development project generally. Each discourse has its unique configuration of ideas and themes. It is important to examine the interconnection between different ideas and themes in the discourses because, as Laclau (1996) reminds us, meaning resides in the connections between words in a chain. The development discourses include "words that work together to evoke a particular set of meanings" (Cornwall and Brock, 2005, p.4).

The discourse in the personal development group has a rather narrow vision of development and only brings together ideas and themes related to personal development and key dimensions of well-being. The discourses of this group do not contain any critiques of the practice of development nor the broader political aspects of development. The available set of ideas and core modules in Robeyns' (2017) frame which are used by the respondents in this group are: definite statements about the ends of development and a distinction between the means and ends and the dimensions of well-being are narrated in terms of functionings and capabilities. This group emphasises the need for education and health. The capability aspect of education is illustrated by Mary who talks about the role of education and training in enabling people. Paul believes that: "through education comes empowerment" and Maura speaks about empowerment because it helps "them to be able to come to make choices for themselves". Thus, there is a differentiation between empowerment and altruism in the narratives. These personal development discourses raise issues of coherence between anti-paternalism and paternalism. Discourses which are paternalistic are indicative of the notion of 'othering' as proposed by the post-colonial theorists. This type of discourse also reinforces the idea of the outsider making decisions for, and imposing solutions on, the beneficiaries of aid, something that the post-colonial theorists have drawn attention to and railed against. As a consequence, this raises the question, are the narratives prescriptive?

The missionary discourses emphasise the spiritual aspects of personal development. There is a tension for missionaries in understanding how to link or balance the material and the religious. Paul, for example, insists that development must be focused on material well-being alongside the formation of the person. He believes that "we can fall into the trap of material development as being development and that's often how it comes across

in various campaigns for helping Africa". The lack of broader political moral views is illustrated by Seamus who recalls "we didn't get involved in justice in those days, we didn't think it was necessary really". A major limitation of the discourses of this group is the failure to include any critical analysis of the structural impediments to development. The lack of any critical awareness implies that this group are accepting of a model of development which is focused solely on intervention to provide services in areas such as health and education. The question to be answered in Chapter Five is: what aspects of their work and life experiences contribute to these limited discourses?

This group consists mainly of elderly missionaries, the majority of whom are based in Africa and first went overseas in the 1950s and 1960s. It is interesting to note that Eamon, a missionary based in Latin America, holds a mindset of development similar to that held by those missionaries based in Africa. The same question has to be asked of Cormac, namely why his concepts as a development worker are similar to the missionaries. Eamon's and Cormac's life histories should help to explain their views and this will be discussed in the next chapter.

The next set of discourses relate to the personal and practice themes of development and there are versions distinctly relating to the development worker and the missionary. The discourses follow a human development approach to development and include elements from Robeyns' (2017) capabilities frame. Human or personal development is their goal. These groups differ from the first in that they are more reflective about the means of achieving this goal. The dimensions of well-being are narrated as functionings and capabilities. What distinguishes these two groups from the first group is the inclusion in the narratives of participative capabilities and criticisms of development practice. These respondents are, nevertheless, wedded to the idea of seamless development and their focus is on the practice aspects of development rather than the macro political aspects of development. In a sense these missionaries and development workers are embracing the notion that themes such as poverty require technical solutions.

The personal development discourses of the development workers and missionaries include 'othering' and paternalistic attitudes with terms such as 'helping' mentioned more than once. From a missionary perspective Joan believes development is helping people to help themselves and Breda speaks of "working with and for the people to build them up". Similarly, from a development worker perspective, development for Martha "is to

help people to improve their lives”. Development workers also include ideas related to empowerment and capacity building. Robert gives a capabilities reading of development when he describes it as “... kind of developing people’s capacities to lead the type of life that they want to live” and “... capacity-building is a thing that we would cling on to as probably the key thing and in a broader sense I suppose empowerment”. The following quote from Yvonne reveals the tension and paternalistic tones that surround the idea of empowerment: “Empowerment is a funny one, you know, most people do mean it in a very positive way, there is some element of it still being a bit patronising, you can’t empower someone else, you know, you can help, support them in their blah blah, their building of their self-confidence, their knowledge and information and what not but empowerment is a funny word”.

What differentiates the missionaries from development workers is their use of religious terms such as human dignity, self-worth and spiritual well-being in their personal development discourses. Again, underlying the use of these religious terms is a sense of paternalism and ‘othering’. There is the notion of giving them something which the missionary perceives they are lacking. Breda, for example, speaks of "working with and for the people to build them up and to give them the dignity which is their right". For John development is “giving them a sense of their own self-worth and their own goodness”. Patricia states that there is a spiritual aspect to development. Ruth spoke about the poverty and the malnutrition she has witnessed and, therefore, development has to be about "dignity, human dignity". Ruth is an example of a missionary linking the spiritual and the material aspects of development.

One of the defining features of the discourses of these two groups is the inclusion of ideas related to participation. These groups embrace what the post-colonial theorists see as the necessary inclusion of the ‘subaltern’ voices in development. Participation is viewed as working in partnership with people, listening to, and dialoguing, with them. All the missionaries spoke of the need to listen to people and to identify what their needs are. To exemplify this Ruth believes you have to "include the people in all the decisions and I would say that was the big effort to do that, all along to try and include the people". For her "when they participate and they’re involved like that you know, they own all the decisions and everything much better". Betty, a development worker, spoke about the need and importance of listening and talking to dialoguing with people. These types of narratives can imply a sense of paternalism or top-down approach to development.

There is also a distinct interconnection between participation and personal development and capabilities. To cite an example of a missionary John links ownership and participation to his views on personal development and states "... without the people's involvement forget about it. It's useless. It's worse than useless because you're making the people dependent without giving them a sense of their self-worth". Education, described as a capability, is linked to the idea of participation where, importantly, it is seen as providing people with the opportunity to participate and make their own decisions. This is illustrated by Ruth who is of the view that education gives people the opportunity "... to be part of the decision-making process, whether it be at government level or at their own family level or personal level or whatever".

Included in the participative narratives of these groups are concerns about the community aspects of development. Indeed, the human development approach has been criticised for being too individualistic. This tension between the individual and the social is part and parcel of the development narrative of Irish development workers and missionaries. Ruth's sense of community and participation is linked to her idea of personal development and well-being. She highlights this by explaining the difference between working in Africa and Latin America, as she sees it, observing that, in Latin America, "... the people had this culture of being in groups". In Africa, on the other hand:

"It was very difficult, like we would have health outreach but there was no connection, there was no committee, it wasn't, we weren't empowering the people to the same extent, we were sort of caring in a way but not leading them, there was no building up of the group there or seeing their whole situation, which we were able to do in Latin America."

Mark, another missionary who worked in Africa, believes development is "... creating awareness among a community of people where they journey together to improve their lifestyle and to be liberated from that which enslaves them".

The second, defining feature of the discourses of these groups is their criticisms of various aspects of the practice of development, such as the idea of imposing solutions on communities. Even though these criticisms tie in with a post-colonial reading of development which rejects the imposition of Western ideas and ethnocentric forms of knowledge, however, they are focused only on the instrumental or practice aspects of development.

Using Robeyns' (2017) frame these criticisms of development practice are regarded as structural constraints which impact on people's conversion factors, that is their ability to convert resources into capabilities. The criticisms of development practice as structural constraints are tied in with the narratives on personal development and participation. Failures in development practice impinge on people's quality of life and their well-being. The failures in development practice are, in many cases, attributed to the failure to pursue participative practices. The imposition of solutions and donor requirements are examples of a lack of participation. The practices of donors and the failures to act in a participative way highlight the power attached to these organisations and the overall power dynamic in the development field.

What sets the development narratives of the personal practice cluster apart from the other two is the criticisms of donor agencies. They are criticised for their methods of work and the requirements they place on recipients of funds. From the missionary perspective John admires what donors are trying to do but says that it is a pity they can't operate in a different way. He recalls how a donor offered to build a school in his area and how their specifications were a little bit over the top. John maintains he could have built a school three times the size with the money the NGO spent. He says these organisations are trying, "but hey drive around in their four wheel drives. They're in the offices. They have all these allowances and maybe they don't have that much interest in the people at heart". Mark is of a similar mindset and says; "I feel sometimes a lot of money would be wasted on unnecessary things but that's the way the agencies work". Breda also commented on how donors "... had made an assumption that the locals would take on the maintenance of the well" they had put in. She recalls, however, that this did not happen.

Development workers hold similar views. Yvonne tells the story of observing a water project in the Latin American country she worked in and thinking about its sustainability. She recalls:

"There was a water project that had been done and they had put in this water system and they had put it with plastic or ceramic pipes but above ground and it was very evident that eventually it would break, it was at the side of the road and people could run over it. It just wasn't really well done. It should have been done with more money and more time and dug. You know, you put in this water system and as it breaks are the people locally trained to fix it? Can they even get the equipment to repair it?"

Robert spoke about his dealings with NGOs and the problems he had with funding. He recalls how donors had specific requirements and wouldn't fund all aspects of his project.

Corruption and its impact on development practice is another theme that is mentioned by a number of respondents. To exemplify this Mark believes there is "... a lot of misplaced funding, corruption, corruption in governments, and corruption in the different departments". Furthermore, he cites one incident where three quarters of the budget of an AIDS' assistance project in the African country he was working in, "... was taken off by the leadership, you know, and that was acknowledged by the government and by the NGOs".

The criticisms detailed here highlight the impact of failures on peoples' well-being. There is a desire for best practice to prevail at the grassroots of development. Even though both the missionaries and development workers are critical of the 'one size fits' all approach to development projects, they are committed to seamless development. These discourses do not take into consideration the broader political aspects of development. Overall, this discourse favours the personal over the political where there is a tension between empowerment and paternalism. The discourses favour ideas related to development over globalisation. The pertinent questions are: Where do these discourses come from and what aspects of the work and biographies in the development field foster these discourses? These will be discussed in Chapter Five.

The remaining four groups broaden the discourses to include macro political themes. These groups include some of the criticisms raised by the post-colonial theorists. The geopolitical group includes narratives that critique the capitalist economic structures and policies which have been in existence since colonial times. The politics and political values group draw attention to political structures that have contributed to inequality and injustice.

The geopolitical discourse includes many of the criticisms put forward by post-colonial theorists and includes areas such as: aid, globalization, international trade and debt. These respondents argue that it is these geopolitical aspects which have impoverished people and restricted development in developing countries. They question the broad thrust of neo-liberal economic policies and the Washington consensus. There is widespread

cynicism in this group about the role of international organisations such as the IMF and the World Bank and their contribution to development. These criticisms are narrated in terms of the capabilities approach and draw attention to what Robeyns (2017) calls structural constraints. These constraints impact on personal development and peoples' well-being, choices and opportunities. The inconsistencies within the discourse of this group are that, in spite of these criticisms they remain attached to the idea and practice of development. The discourse of this group includes the same range of personal development dimensions as the previous groups. Post-colonial critiques such as the imposition of Western ideas and practices, is evident in these respondents' critical accounts of development practice. Overall, there is a tension between development and globalisation where globalisation is seen in a negative light.

The personal development discourse of this group shares with the other groups a sense of 'othering'. The difference between this group and the previous groups is a greater emphasis on capabilities in their personal development narratives which includes terms such as choice and opportunities. For example, Brian says "... it is hard to get away from the individual sort of getting the opportunity to get ahead". The ideas of choice and opportunity are also embedded in their conception of the dimensions of well-being and this is illustrated by Conor who asks: "When it comes to life expectancy, choice means choice in terms of health. Do you have choice in terms of access to healthcare? When it comes to education, do you have a choice of what kind of education you get?". Brendan says "... it's about giving people an opportunity to fulfil their potential". Niall sees development "... as about helping people to help themselves". Empowerment is seen as an important factor in personal development. Empowerment, according to Catherine, is "... about letting someone see that they have ability within themselves and providing them with a pathway to achieve that ability, you know, provide them with the skills, with the training, which is good, which is relevant". Cathy is of the opinion that "people need to be empowered to be independent in order to be able to ask for their entitlements". These development workers prioritise education because of its important role in empowerment and capacity building. This is expressed by Kate who states that "when education improves, people can read and write and analyse and critically think about things".

Participation is not widely mentioned by the respondents in this cluster. Where it is mentioned there is an emphasis on listening to the 'subaltern voices'. For example,



Catherine believes "... it's about listening and communicating, you know, it's about listening. That's another thing I learned when I was away. You have to listen a lot and stop talking, watch and listen and I think that's very basic".

Similar to the post-colonialists these development narratives are critical of imposing Western ideas and solutions and argue for listening to and working with the 'subaltern'. In this vein, Niall argues that "... we shouldn't be trying to instil or impose Western values and northern values, our values, on anyone else". Catherine thinks "... a lot of development projects and development organisations maybe don't listen because they have their own agenda and their own idea of what's right". Ronan draws attention to the harm that is being done by large NGOs because they keep changing their focus. He says "... one year it's 'let's spend all our money on HIV/AIDS, next year it's let's play with malaria'. It's almost like fashionable. Donors are pleasing themselves, whatever they feel like and whatever is the trend. Donors do not understand; we need them but they don't understand the mindset of the poor, I believe".

The growth of the 'development expert' has been a feature of this industry and an example of the dominance of Western ideas. These development workers are critical of this phenomenon. Kate questions the role of experts in development practice and says "... it is a great industry; people are earning huge amounts of money from it. You have consultants over there earning €700.00 per day. It's immoral the amount of money that people earn from working in development". Related to the use of experts is the over-reliance on expatriate staff. A major problem with this model, according to Brendan and Connor, is that staff change all the time and, as Brendan describes it, "you lose all the institutional knowledge". Catherine is of the opinion that:

"Development work can't be done in two weeks. It can't probably be done very effectively in a year. I know it depends. It's very complex, the type of work, certainly there has to be long-term planning. What are the goals? What do you want to achieve? Who is involved in this? What's the money like? How you evaluate all those things seems to be part of development."

There are a wide range of themes included in the macro geopolitical narrative. These respondents argue that it is these geopolitical aspects which have impoverished people and restricted development in developing countries. These geopolitical discourses also reflect the criticisms held by the post-colonial theorists. When people are treated as the ends of development this implies that there is a need to evaluate and criticise political and

economic policies at the international level because of the direct and indirect effect of such policies and practices on the choices, opportunities and well-being of individuals. There are three dimensions to this geopolitical narrative, the first of which is the economic models of development with particular reference to neoliberalism. The second area of concern is the policy frames of organisations such as the IMF and World Bank. Thirdly, questions are raised about the use value of indicators such as the Millennium Development Goals.

The post-colonial theorists draw attention to the global economic imbalances which date back to colonial times. The respondents in this group share this concern. To illustrate this, Noel maintains that "resources are being plundered from African countries". Catherine argues that you have to stop sucking the resources out of a country and recalls how the "copper mines are back up and running again in Zambia but it's all owned by multinationals outside of Zambia and do you know what, none of that money is going back in to the local people and nobody gets paid a decent wage". Brian is particularly critical of "the self-interested foreign policy of nation states, with their protectionist policies". He further argues that "... what's needed for African countries is a true globalisation of free markets". Furthermore, Ronan argues that you have to "... improve trade to a level where you say we don't need to give aid to people any more. That is change, but that is not going to happen that way".

The development literature contains widespread criticisms of the neo-liberal economic policies. These criticisms are also voiced by these respondents. Marie, for example, based on her experiences in Africa, believes "... we are kind of fitting into this sort of neo-liberal model kind of the powers that be that are making the decisions, they have a certain idea, agenda, of how they want things to be and so they are imposing that model through the PRSP process, through putting costs on water, through putting costs on resources and privatization".

Tied into neo-liberal economic policies is the crippling debt that developing countries are under. Even though the narratives draw attention to different aspects of debt the common theme is that debt impedes the functionings and capabilities of people, because countries are always paying it back. Development workers such as Cathy believe developing countries "... are always paying off loans which are controlled by the west". Brian believes debt and the repayments require political decisions which the West won't make

because they will lose out, thereby highlighting the power and inequality at the heart of the relationship between the West and developing countries. Another aspect in his unequal relationship is the degree to which aid is tied which further increases costs and impinges on the well-being of the individual. Catherine draws attention to how these loans are "... actually tied to certain companies which countries have to buy goods from which is more expensive than if they did it a different way".

The post-colonial theorists draw attention to the unequal relations between nation states first initiated in colonial times and now in the hands of organisations such as the IMF and World Bank (Sultana, 2019). The role played by these international organisations in development is questioned by the respondents in this group. The development workers give examples of the direct effects they have witnessed of specific IMF and World Bank policies and practices. These examples illustrate the structural constraints, such as the privatization of resources, which these organisations place on communities. Ronan bluntly describes these organisations as "crooks, completely!" He continues: "they are probably the biggest cause of poverty in Africa". Catherine also has a cynical view and her understanding "... is that they keep countries and people indebted you know, they're kind of shackled". Cathy thinks "the conditions that they put on countries have been unhelpful and have a detrimental effect". She remembers "... in Malawi they changed healthcare policies in order to be able to meet loans and then to be able to pay off loans". Kate gives examples of how the policies of the IMF affect the people on the ground in Nigeria. She recalls how subsidies were removed from petrol and fertilizer and the hardship this caused which was, for her, directly attributable to the policy of the IMF. Niall recalls how the Government had to decentralise the primary health care programme it was developing. They devolved everything except employment and the budget. The local districts were "... now responsible for providing healthcare but they didn't give them any money to do it". As a consequence, he adds: "So, resources if you like, got worse due to the World Bank intervention". Brendan agrees with the view that the IMF has a bad reputation, particularly with all the structural readjustment. However, he also thinks the World Bank has "... produced a lot of good work about development and good theory and good thinking about development".

The development narrative of the respondents in this group highlights the complex nature of development and the importance of having a critical awareness which the post-colonial theorists regard as essential. The discourse highlights the tension and relationship

between development and globalisation, which implies that development goes beyond projects and embraces the geopolitical aspects such as aid, trade and debt. Brendan summarises the complexity of development when he says:

“You need a multi-faceted approach to development that it’s not just about charities raising money and it’s not just about emergency intervention and it’s not just about transition from relief to development and it’s not just about sort of Concern and Trócaire sort of doing voluntary development projects and it’s not just about bi-lateral aid and it’s not just about trade and it’s not just about debt relief it’s a little bit about all of them really”.

In summary, the discourse of this group is developmentalist, focusing on the instrumental aspects of development and criticising the processes of globalisation. At the practical level the narratives are concerned with the imposition of projects and ideas on communities. The macro geopolitical concerns illustrate the tension between development and globalisation. They further relate to the global economic imbalances with special reference to trade and debt. The issue of power is also embedded in these narratives. Here the respondents highlight the power of INGOs and the policy prescriptions they impose on countries. Through their criticisms these development workers are acknowledging the forces of globalisation that are at work in the development field. These critical views are aligned with the criticisms voiced by the post-colonial theorists. In line with the latter the discourse of this group seeks to identify the structural causes of poverty linked to the structure and functioning of the global capitalist system. This discourse, and its inherent range of themes, demonstrates that ideas rooted in theory and ideas generated from practice don’t have to run in parallel and can coexist, which has been outlined above. Moreover, the capability frame of Robeyns (2017) allows us to investigate this. In conclusion, the development workers in this group don’t appear to be what Jackson (2005) terms globalisers and are not propagandists for a triumphant West (Tvedt, 1999). What are the work and life experiences that generate these macro views of development? I will examine these development experiences in Chapter Six.

The discourse of the respondents in the politics and political values group is built on reflexive knowledge and places an emphasis on religious and political values such as justice, equality and rights. There is a clear link between religious ideas and development thinking. The discourse also includes ideas concerning political participation and democracy. These ideas, as discussed above, are structural constraints within Robeyns capabilities’ frame. These themes reflect a post-colonial reading of development which

traces issues such as injustice and inequality to structures introduced in colonial times. However, there are inconsistencies in that the discourses include a sense of ‘othering’ which the post-colonialists rail against.

What sets the discourse of the political values group apart from the other groups is the emphasis on the political and moral aspects of development such as rights, justice and equality. These themes are indicative of a post-colonial reading of development. Unlike the previous missionary groups there are clear links between religious values and development themes in these narratives. This is a generation of missionaries whose thinking has been shaped by Vatican II and liberation theology. Generally, the narrative of the respondents in this group includes references to personal development, needs, functionings and capabilities as well as participation.

Like all the other groups personal development is an important feature in the narratives. The personal development narratives are, however, paternalistic in tone and include a sense of ‘othering’. This is illustrated in the following examples where Laura sees development as “making a person more independent in their own situation, their own lives” and where Phil’s understanding of development “would be to help people to help themselves”. Religious terms such as formation and the dignity of the person are used by nearly all of the missionaries. Maria talks about the human and spiritual aspects of development and for people to be enabled to “live as human beings really, with a dignity as a child of God in society”. Luke is of the opinion that development is “about enabling people, empowerment and formation. It is also about the dignity of the person”. Similar to the post-colonialists Tim links the religious idea of formation with having a critical awareness, where development is about “leadership formation which has to do with helping people to have a critical mind”.

This group places an emphasis on community and participation. Its members believe in listening to the ‘subaltern’ and not imposing western ideas. To highlight this Tim speaks about the importance of people “getting involved in decision-making in the community, the barrio”. This is shared by Martin but he believes that “... you have to take the people where they are at and that you will only be able to get them involved if you are actually able to respond to what they are concerned with”.

The critical awareness that the post-colonial theorists call for is in evidence in the macro political views of these respondents. This group views development in a similar manner to the pedagogy that McEwan (2019) proposes. The central questions which are asked are: why are people poor? Also, what are the structures of inequality and injustice that cause poverty? For example, Nora talks about how she has become politicised from her time in Brazil and how she came to believe that: “It’s not just handing out things to the poor but asking questions why are they poor”? The distribution of wealth and the embeddedness of inequality figure prominently in the discourses. The idea of justice and equality are at the forefront of both Martin’s and Tim’s criticisms of trickle-down economic policies which have failed the poor. Tim states:

“In Latin America and places like this, what is put forward as the motor of change is economic growth, and then this trickle-down theory or this investment in social policies. That hasn’t happened yet, any wealth that has been created hasn’t been distributed so I cannot see anything to suggest that this will be distributed and I suppose looking at the area I am working in tells me that something else has to happen, that in a sense would have influenced my view that this particular model is not reaching the very poor and they are excluded from the benefits of this particular model”.

Maria also spoke about the inequalities she witnessed in Brazil and cites the statistics where the top five per cent of landowners own ninety per cent of the land. She recalls how these landowners were exploiting the poor, taking land off them. Phil believes that a redistribution of wealth is needed in Brazil but that this has been resisted by the Government. Gender equality is another issue in the discourse and is a big issue for Joe who is based in Africa. He believes “one of the big development aspects is the equality of men and women and bringing up the women and that is crucial to development”.

Another political value prominent in the discourses is the issue of rights and how they are being denied to the poor and marginalised. To illustrate this Martin talks about how the poor “... are being dominated by a government which is not actually working for peoples’ rights”. Luke argues that the essence of loving thy neighbour is people being “... accorded their rights or their rights are respected so then fundamentally working for justice and dignity in a country where there is a tremendous abuse of the ordinary people and there always has been, corruption, injustice and very unfair distribution of wealth”. Chris is drawn to the Declaration of Human Rights but sees a weakness in them that they do not include responsibilities. He says: “I’m obliged to help people, if I’m in a position to I’m obliged to help”.

An important feature of the discourses of this group is the interlinkages between the different development themes and religious ideas. There is a link between views of personal development and political values. An example of this is Tim who argues for "... people to become empowered and to own themselves, their rights and their sense of being citizens and to search and struggle and demand as something that's both God given and both politically given". Authors such as Deneulin (2013), Haustein (2021), Smith (2017), Spies and Schrode (2021) and Tomalin (2018; 2021) make the case for the link between religion and development. The interconnection between religious ideas and development themes is clear in the discourses of this group of missionaries. The connection between religious values (human dignity) and political ideas (justice and equality) is illustrated by Luke who argues that the essence of loving thy neighbour is people being "... accorded their rights or their rights are respected so then fundamentally working for justice and dignity in a country where there is a tremendous abuse of the ordinary people and there always has been, corruption, injustice and very unfair distribution of wealth". Political participation is also linked to religious ideas of formation and leadership formation in particular. Empowerment, in turn, is linked with people's rights and having a sense of their citizenship. Participation is discussed in terms of personal choice and also within the context of politics. The discourses illustrate the links between personal development, capabilities' participation, democracy, political values and religious values. The tension between the personal and the political is resolved whereby the political has to be at the service of people. There is an accommodation between the religious and the secular, where religious and secular ideas are interlinked, working towards the common goal of human development and the well-being of the individual. In essence the discourse of this group "... denotes a structure in the way reality (or a certain aspect of it) is constructed through language" (Ziai, 2016, p.55). The question to be discussed in Chapter Six is, where do these ideas come from and how are they linked to their religious beliefs and definition of mission? This group, for the most part, comprises missionaries working in Latin America. What are the contexts of the work and life experiences in their biographies in Latin America that generate their understanding of development? This will be investigated in Chapter Six.

The last sets of discourses are the combined political discourses of geopolitics and political values. There are two distinct versions, one being the missionary and the other

being the development worker. Both groups include a broad range of ideas and themes such as: the personal, practice, political values and geopolitical critiques. The discourses of these two groups reflect a broad range of the post-colonial critiques of development. There are nevertheless inconsistencies in these discourses. The more professionalised development worker, for example, embraces the interventionist instrumental practice element of development whilst at the same time criticising the global forces at play in the field and in particular the negative impact of policy frames of organisations such as the IMF and the World Bank on the well-being of people. Like the previous political groups there are interlinkages between the themes in the discourses.

The missionaries in the geopolitical and political values group are, for the most part, Latin America based and priests with no occupational specialism dominate this group. There are similarities between the discourse of this group and the missionaries with the political values discourse. The difference is that this group also includes geopolitical critiques, where well-being is linked to the policies and practices of international organisations and international trade policies. There are interlinkages between religious beliefs and political values. Again, liberation theology and its associated development paradigm dependency theory has a significant bearing on their discourses.

In line with all the other groups personal development is at the heart of their understanding of development and is articulated in religious and secular terms. For James development has a triple focus: "a sense of faith, spiritual development, but also human development". Rory talks about how his understanding of development mirrors his understanding of mission. For him development at the personal level is about human relationships, respect between people and dignity.

Again, participation, listening to and involving the 'subaltern' as proposed by the post-colonialists, is evident in these discourses. So, Rory believes that "participation is very important, unless the people are involved in the thing you're going to get nowhere. Unless at the end of it the skill that the people have acquired in trying to do it themselves with the help of other people, unless that has been enhanced, you're going nowhere, certainly you're going nowhere fast".



The geopolitical critiques of the missionaries also reflect the criticisms outlined by the post-colonial theorists. These missionaries share the concern of the post-colonialists that the structures of inequality forged in colonial times are perpetuated through the work of international organisations such as the IMF and World Bank. Furthermore, James believes these policies have promoted a model of development that "... really hasn't been effective across the board or has produced the sorts of desired results". Eric has "... the impression that they were working to reinforce and stabilise the world economy in favour of the already wealthy sectors of the world. I never had the impression that they were working to empower the poor". The impact of these neo-liberal policies and trickle-down economics is summarised by Rory, a missionary, who says:

"I would say the same thing about the trickle-down effect of the thing here (Peru) that Sean Healy<sup>22</sup> says in the little booklets in Ireland, unless social policy is orientated to address the massive inequality and the structural injustice the significance of the trickle-down effect is minimal. That it is totally non-existent I suppose you can't say that with a hundred per cent certainty but like it's minimal, it's minimal".

James asks a valid question about the nature of aid and states: "the amount of money that goes into aid or under the guise of aid so much of it actually is in specific projects that have to do with trade and economics".

Like their fellow missionaries in the previous groups political values figure prominently in their discourses. Again, these views chime with a post-colonial view of development. James believes "... injustice is so all pervasive" in Latin America. Rory believes "you can't talk about development when the rules of the game are stacked in favour of the rich". He continues "... the greatest poverty doesn't exist in Latin America, it exists in Africa, but the greatest inequality exists in Latin America". The inter-linkages between religious values and political values are evident in Rory's view of development which, for him, is about "equality, justice, human relationships, respect, dignity, justice and people having a fair crack of the whip". In line with dependency theories and the post-colonial perspective Rory gives a good summary of the historical roots and complex nature of development:

"The main issues which still have to be dealt with, from the time of the conquests to now in a very different international context and with very different issues at stake, like Third World debt, world trade, commerce, international relations, all that globalisation surfaces, yeah, and yet there are things about equality, racial equality, human dignity, human rights, all have a call and an opportunity to live life humanly

---

<sup>22</sup> Fr Sean Healy is the director of Social Justice Ireland, who publish various commentaries on Ireland's Economic and Social policies

and whatever mitigates against that is a very important issue, especially on the structural level”.

The discourse of the development worker group is multidimensional and shares with the post-colonial theorists a very broad range of criticisms of development. The focus is on human development and the discourses include many of the key elements from Robeyns’ capability frame. Like the other groups of development workers there are references to the instrumental aspects of development and, in particular, participation, sustainability and best practice. This group, like the geopolitical group, traces issues such as poverty back to broad economic, political and geopolitical structures and policies. Here there is the sort of critical awareness that post-colonialists such as McEwan (2019) believe is important when thinking about the development of the global economy. The discourses display an interconnection between the different themes such as the linkage between the well-being of people and communities and the international policies of INGOs.

The discourse on personal development includes the same range of ideas which were present in the previous groups. This group adopts a capabilities approach to personal development with choice and opportunities prominent and the dimensions of well-being are presented in terms of functionings and capabilities. For example, Larry talks about people being able to develop "... their potential and to avail of their opportunities. For Aidan, development "... is about maximising opportunities for a decent living". There is the tension between paternalism and anti-paternalism relating to education and empowerment. Lucy’s definition of empowerment includes choice and is anti-paternalistic. She believes: “Education is about empowering people to make choices for themselves and opening up opportunities for people. If it does not do that, it is not being effective”. The religious aspects of personal development are mentioned by one development worker, Aidan, who talks about how he likes “... the language of duty-bearers, you know, where those with power need to be of service to others. It matches that Christian dimension of being of service, you know, Christ being of service”. This mirrors the Christian perspective as outlined by Deneulin (2013).

Poverty is universally accepted as a significant structural constraint on human development. Liam describes his experiences of witnessing poverty in Africa and maintains: “The grinding destructive, horrific trap that that kind of absolute poverty constitutes, a relief of that has to be an element in most people’s conception of what development must be about”.

Participation is also an important feature in the narratives for a majority of the respondents in this group. Again, the concerns of the post-colonialists in relation to listening and including the 'subaltern' in decision making is evident in these discourses. Larry believes the participative processes need to be more effective. There is a need for greater ownership of the processes by people themselves. He is of the view that: "... unless the ownership of the process is taken on board locally and it's built in to whatever psyche and it's valued that way, it won't work". This, for him, raises the question: "how can you create an enabling environment for people power, people participation you know? Unless they define their priorities and they complain about things they don't like and they mobilize and participate in the solutions themselves".

A majority of the respondents in this group include criticism of development practice in their narratives. However, the more professionalised development workers tend to focus on what they believe to be best practice and question the role and usefulness of the volunteer or short-term development worker. In common with the post-colonial theorists the criticisms in these discourses highlight the problems associated with the imposition of western Eurocentric knowledge and practices. For example, Miriam says donors come in and tell the communities what they need. According to her, they say "you need projects, you need to start weaving and selling your products to tourists". Julie gives an example of how donor funding can have a huge impact on the design of a project, observing: "if a project needs money for agriculture and they come to one organization it's no, we only do money for education then the whole focus is changed and they do an educational project". Colin recalls from his time in Latin America that HIV funding was in vogue and so the NGOs "are going to design projects to fit the donors and donor stipulations". Colin believes this takes "a lot of the natural dynamic away from the NGO and, in the end, they are just working according to the parameters that are set down by the donors". Larry is of the opinion that there should be "... a harmonized environment in which donors coordinate what they're doing so that they don't actually create more problems for people by pulling and hauling governments and societies in different directions for funding".

The critical awareness this group displays extends to the power and control associated with the policies and practices of international organisations such as the IMF and World

Bank. Concerns about international trade also feature in the discourses. Again, these discourses mirror the critical arguments presented by the post-colonial theorists. Liam argues that there is a lack of real democracy within these organisations. They are responsible for "... devising a certain model of what development constitutes and the effective imposition of it on countries throughout the world". Brenda worked in Latin America and gives voice to the pressure the policies of the IMF put on countries, arguing that "The loans to countries like Bolivia are huge and there is a lot of pressure on Bolivia to privatise natural resources, water and gas, and these are the conditions to drop the debt". Aidan spoke about how Zimbabwe did not benefit from a World Bank structural adjustment programme. He questions whether these programmes are "a tool of a liberal, neo-colonial agenda". For Liam "... the problem with the new liberal consensus or the liberal orthodoxy, Washington or post-Washington consensus, is that this is the one true way, whereas if it is to be meaningful, development has to be about people making choices as to what kind of society they want to construct and in what way". The net result of the policies and practices of these organisations, according to Colin, is that development practice is "... depoliticised and is in a political vacuum and the aim is to technocratize development".

The issue of trade and fair trade is a concern for the respondents in this group. Steve's focus is Africa and he talked about the injustice associated with international trade. Lucy is of the view that "... trade policies are probably one of the major stumbling blocks to development", adding that "... there are enough resources on the planet to share around in a fair way", however, she believes there is a need to change policies at a global level for this to happen.

The development workers use the same set of political values (rights, justice and equality) that the missionaries use. Larry, for example, says that people have "... to be able to address issues that have fundamental things for their existence and their own personal development, their human rights". Lucy believes development is "... the whole push towards achieving social justice and human rights and for more people. It's essentially about how to give, how to bring justice and progress to people". Aidan, who is also based in Africa, says he is "... drawn to the language of rights" and this, for him, is linked to his Christian beliefs. Aidan speaks of people's rights in terms of:

"Their right to a basic living, as in the kind of Universal Declaration for Human Rights. The right to live, the right to shelter, the right to food, the right to work, the

right to make a living and then without making any distinction from economic and political rights. All rights are indivisible you know the right to speak, the right to assemble, the right to representation, the right to association”.

Justice and equality also feature in the development discourses of the respondents in this group. Julie says development is "... in some way working towards equality and justice". Justice for Fred "... is about answering the question ‘Is this fair?’ and if it’s not what can I do about it. Should I do something about it? What can I do about it? Justice is, it’s a value, I think it’s a value where people are treated fairly". Fred's eyes were opened to the injustices he saw in Nicaragua and, for him, "... injustice is also where people, in order to line their own pockets, you know that kind of thing, have no sense in which the impact that it has on other people".

Linked to the theme of political values is the idea that above all development is about a political struggle. Based on his experiences in Latin America Colin argues that "... development is about political struggle and the only way development will be achieved is through political struggle". Liam shares this view, maintaining that development is "... always fundamentally about political choices". The argument is that real social change only comes about through politics. Liam believes that projects don't operate in a separate sphere, but are "... only one part of a broader process of change and conflict". The development workers raise concerns about the political institutions that are available to people such as the quality and efficacy of the democratic institutions. They talk about the importance of democracy and Liam, for example, maintains that there is "... an inextricable democratic dimension to development”.

In summary, the development discourses of this group mirror the post-colonial critique of development. The critical approach adopted here is similar to that proposed by McEwan (2019) where issues such as poverty are addressed as structural problems embedded in the unjust and unequal economic structures, unjust political systems and propped up by the policies and practices of a myriad international organisations. Aidan gives a good summary of the broader issues in development which "... are much bigger than that they have to do with global economics, trade, debt and who controls finance and the whole colonial legacy. It had to do with war, the Cold War where so much of the Developing World was militarised and so all those global issues and politics”. Overall, the discourses in this group highlight the complexity of development and how the

instrumental and practice elements are intertwined with the broad political ideas. The narratives indicate a group who are clearly not globalisers and, furthermore, one which shares many of the ideas of the post-colonial theorists.

In summary, Tables 4.3 to Table 4.5 revealed that the seven groups of development discourses contain distinct combinations of ideas and themes, many of which are interlinked. There is a hierarchy of themes in these discourses and human development is a central focus but it isn't the only story. The seven discourses highlight generational, occupational and regional differences. The thinking of the younger, Africa-based development workers is more multi-faceted compared with their older missionary counterparts. Political themes are at the forefront of the narratives of both missionaries and development workers located in Latin America. The tables also reveal that there are a number of respondents whose discourses are quite different from the main group or region to which they are attached. They also clearly demonstrate that group, regional and occupational differences are not universally consistent. There are, for example, missionaries who share the same views as development workers and there are Latin America-based workers whose views are akin to those based in Africa.

#### **4.5 Conclusion**

Overall, the analysis in this chapter reveals a broad range of ideas and themes which constitute instrumental and reflexive knowledge about development. I categorised the range of ideas in the substantial descriptive narratives using Robeyns' (2017) modular capabilities frame. This frame allows for other factors such as political and religious values to be included in a capabilities – human development analysis. More importantly this frame permits us to include critical accounts of development in the analysis. This assisted in revealing seven different discourses of development amongst the Irish development workers and missionaries. Table 4.6 below gives a summary of the seven groups of discourses and the ideas and themes that make up these discourses. They highlight the range of thinking from personal development through to the more critical and political aspects of development. There are, furthermore, interlinkages between different themes in the discourses. The analysis of these discourses also showed that there are groups of themes unique to different groups of respondents and regions. Thus, development is framed in different ways by missionaries and development workers, with

religious values permeating the missionary narratives. The discourses are also generational reflecting the development ideas of their time.

**Table 4.6 The Irish Development Worker and Missionary Discourses of Development**

		Themes / Ideas Mentioned				
		Personal Development (Basic needs Dimensions of well-being)	Participation	Critique of Practice	Rights, Justice, Equality Democracy	Fair Trade Criticism of Policies of IMF & World Bank
Micro Personal Practice Discourses	Personal	X				
	Personal Practice (Missionary)	X	X	X		
	Personal Practice (Development worker)	X	X	X		
Macro Political Discourses	Political Values	X	X		X	
	Geopolitical Critique	X	X	X		X
	Political Values and Geopolitical Critique (Development worker)	X	X	X	X	X
	Political Values and Geopolitical Critique (Missionary)		X	X	X	X

An analysis of the seven discourses reveals a wide range of significantly different understandings of development within an overall concept of human development. A post-colonial analysis of the discourses reveals tensions and inconsistencies across the seven different discourses. These inconsistencies also highlight the disjuncture between theory and practice within development studies.

The first missionary group of discourses is focused on personal development and basic needs. The discourse of this group reflects many of the criticisms that the post-colonialists level against development. The paternalistic, personal, development narratives include a sense of ‘othering’. The people they are working with are in need of help and external / western help at that. A significant deficit in the discourse of this group is a lack of a critical perspective especially when it comes to structural issues which the post-colonialists see as the principal causes of poverty. This first missionary group sees little or no connection between religion and development which is contrary to the prevailing thinking as outlined in Chapter Two.

The second missionary group is focused on personal development and the practice of development. There are inconsistencies in these discourses. On the one hand the discourses fall foul of the post-colonial criticism and use expressions of ‘othering’. On the other hand, these discourses agree with the post-colonialists and make the case for the inclusion of the ‘subaltern’ through participation. Another point of commonality with the post-colonialists is that this group criticise the imposition of Western ideas and solutions. This group of missionaries make a connection between religious ideas and development particularly in terms of personal development. However, a failing of this group from a post-colonial perspective is the lack of a structural critique and analysis in the discourses.

The discourses of the first development worker group are similar to the missionary, personal practice discourses. There are the same contradictions between ‘othering’ and the importance of involving the ‘subaltern’. The focus of this group is on development practice and they share the concerns of the post-colonialists about the imposition of Western ideas and practices. Like the missionaries in the previous groups there is a distinct lack of a critical analysis of the political and geopolitical impediments to development. From a human development standpoint individual well-being is just linked to the practice or instrumental aspects of development.

The second group of development workers is a group that arrives at an emergent, geopolitical discourse which is interlinked with a critique of practice. The discourses of this group include many of the criticisms posited by the post-colonial theorists. The distinguishing feature of this group is the inclusion of critical accounts of the geopolitical



structures dating back to colonial times that impoverish people. Like the previous development worker group, they are critical of the imposition of Western ideas and solutions. However, the discourses display a sense of 'othering' common to all the other groups. The well-being of the individual is not only affected by the vagaries of development practice but also global trading relations and the policies and practices of international organisations.

Chapter Two also highlighted the importance of politics and political values to the well-being of individuals and communities. The absence of these is a cause of significant concern for the post-colonial theorists. Chapter two focused on the link between these political values and religious values. The discourses of the missionary political values group include these political and religious values. They highlight the interplay between religious values and political values. Indeed, their development discourses are informed by their religious beliefs.

The final two groups of discourses, one comprising development workers and the other missionaries, embrace a wide range of criticisms put forward by the post-colonialists. These two groups reject the imposition of ideas and solutions and embrace participative practices which include the 'subaltern'. These two groups produce a discourse that contains both geopolitics, politics and political values which come through and are interlinked with one participative and one a critique of practice or both. There is the same interlinkage between religious beliefs and political values for this group of missionaries. Overall, the discourses of these two groups demonstrate how a human development perspective which incorporates a post-colonial critique implies that the well-being of the individual and communities is impacted not only by the practice of development but also by global economic and political structures and policies. These discourses, like the post-colonial critiques, draw attention not only to the structures that impoverish the global south but also the ways of thinking that keep the global south impoverished. The discourses illustrate the necessity to bring in critiques and a critical awareness into a human development - capabilities frame. This allows us to explore a wide range of conditions that impact on the well-being of the individual.

It must be noted that development workers do not have discourses that solely end up with personal development nor discourses that finish with politics and political values.

Furthermore, the missionary discourses do not have a group that solely ends up with geopolitics.

The differences across the seven discourses draw attention to some questions that I will address in subsequent chapters. Why does the personal, practice discourse have a critique of development practice whereas the personal, participative one does not? Why do Africa-based development workers with the geopolitical discourse have political views of development whereas the secular development workers in the personal and personal practice groups who are Africa-based do not? Why do the missionaries in the broad political groups include political values whereas the missionaries in the other groups do not? The question then is, where does this body of knowledge come from? How can we account for the different groups of discourses distributed across the seven groups of respondents? What is the process of learning which these different groups of development workers are engaged in? To what extent does their life history in terms of work and life experiences shape their understanding of development? How are their ethical dispositions shaped and reshaped in their journey through the development field? I will address these questions in the next two chapters. In Chapter Five I will discuss the process of learning of the three personal practice groups (two missionary and one development worker). In Chapter Six I will discuss the process of learning of the four political groups (two missionary and two development worker).

## Chapter 5 Experiences of Development Personal - Practice Groups

---

### 5.1 Introduction

Chapter Four revealed a variety of ideas in the development narratives of Irish development workers; that these ideas could be grouped under six main development themes and that the various configurations of themes combine to generate five development discourses (with distinctive missionary and development worker versions of two of these).

The aim of the next two chapters is to answer the central question, where do these seven different development discourses come from? Do development workers and missionaries start off with a blank canvas and learn through practice and through their journey in the development field? Is it really a blank canvas or are there underlying ideologies or belief systems which have a bearing on their thinking? What aspects of the life journey in the development field make the greatest contribution in the process of learning? How does the nature of work and their occupational specialism shape the life journey in development? How are these narratives shaped by having a career in the development field? How does the context, such as the regional location of these work and life experiences, contribute to the process of learning? Is there an interactive effect between the different facets of the life journey? To what extent does reflexivity contribute to changing practices and learning about development? To what extent do similarities and differences between missionaries and development workers in their experiences shape their development discourses?

These questions stem from the literature, as outlined in Chapter Two, on the different aspects of the roles, beliefs, work and life experiences of individual development workers. As noted, this area of the literature tends to focus separately on work experiences and development discourses, with relatively few links between them. There is a body of literature which takes a critical look at the role and characterization of development workers, identifying them as globalisers (Jackson, 2005) and highlighting the power they have (Goudge, 2003). However, other literature sees a more complex picture. The literature on religion and mission (Bosch, 1991; Dorr, 2000; Tomalin, 2013; Smith, 2017;

Spies and Schrode, 2021) also provide an understanding of the beliefs of the missionaries. There is a debate about the beliefs, values and agency of development workers (De Jong, 2011; Fechter, 2012; Mangold, 2012) and Shutt (2012) which shows that these workers actively seek to make sense of their experiences in the local contexts. Roth (2015) examines the life and work of these workers in a more holistic way, which allows us to dig deeper in to this process. This gives us an insight into development workers' groups into and through the field, including their working and living conditions. While focusing on the biographies of these workers Eyben (2012) seeks to identify what the key events in this journey are. The literature on mission also identifies the different ways of being a missionary. This field of literature, in conjunction with the literature on situated learning, alongside the scholarly work on values, reflection and agency, provide a framework for examining the process of learning which ultimately shapes the seven different development discourses.

This chapter focuses on the process of learning of the missionaries and development workers who hold one of the first three discourses, including a Personal Development discourse (almost exclusively among missionaries) and development worker and missionary versions of a discourse focused on the personal and practice aspects of development. In the following chapter I will discuss the process of learning which generates the four remaining more explicitly 'political' discourses. The aim of these chapters is to show that this thesis builds on the literature on the beliefs roles and practices of development workers and missionaries by linking the experiences to the missionary and development workers' understanding of development.

## **5.2 An Overview of the Mix of Origins, Work Roles, Socio-Political Contexts**

Before I give a detailed account of the mix of experiences that contribute to the process of learning I will give a brief overview of the origins, work roles, socio-political contexts (Region, dominant theories at time of entry into the field) and how these are shaped by missionary/secular status, gender and generation. This overview is set out in table 5.1 below. Firstly, this table indicates that there are important gender differences. These differences are most apparent between the personal-practice discourses and the more political discourses. These differences seem at first glance to also be linked to

occupational roles and sector of work that is the gendering of work. As discussed in Chapter two the Catholic Church is structured along hierarchical gendered roles. The subordinated religious sisters have largely been confined to occupational roles in health and education. These gendered roles will be explored further in these chapters. There is less evidence of distinct gendered roles amongst the development workers.

**Table 5.1 Profile of Sample: Overview of the Mix of Origins, Work Roles, Socio-Political Contexts**

<b>Discourse of development</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Date first went</b>	<b>Average Age</b>	<b>Still working</b>	<b>Work</b>	<b>Theories of development in vogue when they started out</b>
Personal	Majority missionary	Female =4 Male = 4	Majority Africa	Late 1950s to 1960s	75	Majority No	Health & Education	Modernisation & Dependency
Religious & Personal practice	All Missionary	Female =7 Male =2	Majority Africa	Majority 1970s (7) a further 3 in the 1960s	66	Majority Yes	Health	Dependency & Alternative (Human flourishing)
Personal practice	All Development worker	Female =4 Male =1	Africa (3) L.America (2)	Majority 1990s (4) & (1) 1982	52	Majority No	NGO & community development	Human development & post-colonialism
Political values & religious	All missionary	Female =3 Male = 8	Majority L America	1960s and 1970s & (2) in the 1950s	66	Majority yes	Priest, Education	Dependency & Alternative (Human flourishing)
Geopolitical	All Development worker	Female =5 Male =6	Majority Africa	1990s and 2000s	38	(5) Yes (6) No	Health, Education NGO	Post-colonialism Millennium development goals Human development?
Geopolitical & Political values	All Development worker	Female =4 Male =7	Majority L.America (4) Africa	Majority 1990s	38	(9) Yes (2) No	NGO & Community Development	Post-colonialism Human development?
Geopolitical & Political values	All missionary	Female =1 Male =4	All L.America	Majority 1970s (1) 1995	59	Yes	Health Priest	Dependency & Alternative (Human flourishing)

Table 5.1 also highlights the variety of occupations that make up development work. As highlighted in chapter four there is a group of professionalised development workers. Chapter six will set out the range of experiences garnered from these roles. Table 5.1 also gives an overview of the generational differences across my sample. These generational differences draw our attention to the prevailing belief systems and theoretical perspectives in operation when the respondents first embarked on their journey in the development field. There are clear generational differences across the missionary groups. The personal missionary group is an older cohort who went overseas in the 1950s and 1960s. These individuals started out as missionaries prior to the reforms of Vatican II and were imbued with the missionary spirit of conversion and church building. The missionary political values group are a younger generation who first went overseas post Vatican II when liberation theology held sway. As discussed in Chapter two liberation theology was influenced by dependency theories of development. This generation of missionaries were influenced by the political context of life in Latin America. Indeed, regional context and in particular the political context of Latin America also had a bearing on the thinking of the development workers based there as highlighted in Chapter four. The extent of these influences will be discussed in these chapters.

There are however, additional processes at work in addition to the three factors of gender, generation and regional context. There are many practitioners who do not fully fit the patterns in each of the groups. The generational and regional categories themselves contain significant internal diversity.

### **5.3 Irish Development Workers and Missionaries Common or Shared Experiences**

Before I examine the processes of learning around each of the discourses, it is important to note that there are a number of features common to all missionaries and development workers in this study. Firstly, the motivations of these development workers involve an ethical concern about the well-being of the individual. For the majority of those interviewed altruism is one of the chief motivational factors influencing their decisions to work in developing countries. This is a quite generalised notion of ‘helping’ that is similar across the group. Missionaries such as Breda had "the desire to help and educate people" and Ruth, who wanted to join a missionary congregation and somehow, “felt drawn to do more for people”. These notions are similar to those of the altruistic motivations of the development workers. Brian recalls "growing up in Ireland and hearing

all this needy of the world and you had a feeling that you wanted to do your bit". Ronan worked in both Africa and Latin America "felt compelled to see if I could try to help". Cathy referred to her skill sets and how they could be used and she felt "I could go out and be an occupational therapist in Africa I had a role and I could give something back as well". When Brendan qualified as a doctor, he wanted to spend some time working in a poor country and he says there was "the old giving something back sort of thing". The general idea of 'helping' and 'giving back' was quite common across these various interviewees. As discussed in Chapter four there is an underlying sense of 'othering' in these motivations.

Coupled with altruism, personal, professional and underlying belief systems form part of decisions to go overseas. As will be shown in the next two chapters these motivations and belief systems work in different ways in shaping the respective journeys for the missionaries and development workers across the seven groups. For example, in the case of the missionaries their understanding of mission dictates the type of activities they are involved in. With the exception of the personal missionary group all the other missionary groups subscribe to what Dorr (2000) sees as a broader vision of mission which includes ideas such as doing, being and sharing with people. This broader version is articulated in different ways and gives rise to different forms of work practices which will be discussed in the next two chapters.

The missionaries spoke about the role played by the missionary organisation magazines, such as the 'Far East' and 'Africa' in their decision to become missionaries. These were distributed through parishes and schools in Ireland. The young readers were influenced by the stories of the work of the missionaries. These became an important source of information and inspiration for them in their formative years. These magazines whetted their appetite to go out and help and experience the exotic. Paul for example recalls how the magazines "kind of presented... a new kind of life". Martin says he was attracted to the organisation by their magazine 'the Far East'.

There are features of the work practices that all the different groups of development workers and missionaries share and these are: adaptability, experimentation, flexibility, autonomy and spontaneity (Mintzberg & Azevedo, 2012; Roth, 2015). The majority of the development workers have work experiences which Roth (2015) describes as 'macho' work which is about getting things done and taking risks and 'feminine' behaviour, which



is mentoring, communication and team-building. These features are illustrated in the descriptive accounts of their working lives. Helen a missionary for example talks about her early role as a doctor in Sierra Leone and explains that:

“They came with their various sicknesses. It was wonderful to be able to do something. It was my first experience of being a doctor on my own, with an interpreter, as I had no idea of the language, and try and figure out the problem and address it as best I could. Then I never stopped trying to improve my knowledge of medical work, improve my ability to address the public and as well as that improve my knowledge of the people and what was happening”.

Ruth another missionary recalls how when they didn't have doctors and so "... they had to do a lot themselves, there were many things that you had to do, you know, in fear and trembling sometimes, but you know we managed". In her work in the clinic, she faced the same constraints as the medics in the personal group. She had to work with a limited supply of drugs and they tended to "... run out of medical supplies by the middle of the month". Nora a missionary and from her experience as a teacher in Africa remembers that "we didn't have a general supply of electricity. We had our own generators and when they broke down, we would be without electricity. Sometimes during study at night, the light would go, you know, that kind of thing, so we were working in difficult conditions but not particularly suffering".

The development workers also experienced the need for flexibility and adaptability as illustrated by Brian who recalls how he was working with his back to the wall working with limited supplies. He says he coped as best he could but found it frustrating and he says that "after a while you do get used to what is available and work around this". In general, he feels that you adapt to the circumstances in your medical practice and learn to cope with the available facilities. He recalls that the clinics "were fairly basic, no running water, no electricity. So, water would come from a local bore hole or well or whatever. Lighting at night time would have been, was a big problem, oil lamps or solar charged sort of lamps but they were always breaking down". The need for adaptability is illustrated by Fred who remembers that:

"The information I had was based on, I was going to be training people who were working with adults in the town of El Viejo, but what I discovered was, that between the local organization, applying for somebody and APSO and then actually, me starting with them, two years had passed. But I wasn't told this. So, in other words at the time this was what they wanted but the project changed. I was still training trainers but they were working with primary school age children in rural communities mainly, so more interesting from my point of view".

Larry, another development worker who has considerable experience working in development, observed: "When you are a volunteer you have to do what's there to be done and so you develop a whole range of skills that you would never develop normally in Ireland". He recalls how he had "to do all sorts of things in an emergency situation". Part and parcel of development work for him is "just trying to look at problems in a creative way and trying to find solutions that work and resolve the issue". This vision of the work of volunteers' mirrors what Roth (2015) sees as the 'macho' aspect of aid work.

Given these shared contexts of a general desire to help and the typically high demands on workers to be flexible and resourceful, we can now turn to the processes that generated quite different development discourses among development workers and missionaries.

#### **5.4 Learning about Development for the 'Personal Development' Group**

Table 5.2 below gives a profile of the seven missionaries development discourse is focused on Personal Development. For the most part this is an elderly cohort who are retired with only two respondents still working in the sector, and most spent a considerable period of time in Africa. Most of the missionaries in this group first went overseas in the 1950s and 1960s, prior to Vatican II and the changes that took place within the Catholic Church and Catholic social teaching during the synods of Bishops in 1971 and 1974. Almost all of the missionary sisters work, or worked, in health while two missionaries work in education. Two of the three missionary priests (Eamon and Seamus), both retired, had no other occupational specialism. There is one outlier in this group, Cormac, whose views of development are similar to the missionaries are focused on personal development.

**Table 5.2 Profile of the Respondents with the Personal Development Discourse**

Pseudo Name	Region	Occupation	Age	Date first went	No of years	Still working
<b>Eamon</b>	Latin America	Priest no specialism	80	1955	40+	<b>No</b>
<b>Seamus</b>	Africa	Priest no specialism	80	1958	40+	<b>No</b>
<b>Paul</b>	Africa	Education	65	1971	30+	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Joan</b>	Africa	Education	70	1957	30+	<b>No</b>
<b>Patricia</b>	Africa	Health	75	1963	40+	<b>No</b>
<b>Eileen</b>	Africa	Health	73	1960	40+	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mary</b>	Africa	Health	84	1960s	40+	<b>No</b>
<b>Cormac</b> (Development worker)	Africa	Health	32	1995	2	No

#### 5.4.1 Origins and Motivations

The idea of having a vocation or a calling is prominent in the motivations of the missionaries. However, there is a distinct difference in the motivations of the missionary priests and missionary sisters in this group. For the most part the priests were drawn to the idea of conversion. Seamus, for example, says he "went out with a conversion mentality" and believed they were doing good because they were preaching the word of God and trying to bring people into the Church. Eamon recalls that the missionary "aim was to convert people and have pastors to look after them". Eamon, unlike many of the priests we discuss later, did not bother with liberation theology because, according to him, the themes espoused by these theologians were covered by existing church teaching. He talked about how he drew inspiration from Pope Leo XIII's 1891 document 'Rerum Novarum' which drew attention to the conditions that industrial workers faced. Eamon and Seamus, who were trained in an older spirituality preceding Vatican II, are representative of those who took to new ideas very slowly because they "were in a process of disengaging from an older spirituality ....and that changes in spirituality - being changes in the heart, as much as in the head - come about rather more slowly than changes in theology" (Dorr, 2012, p.141). For these priests, it is their theology that most strongly shapes their development discourse.

Paul, on the other hand, comes from a different generation of missionaries (post-Vatican II) and was ordained in the early 1970s. He says that his original reason for becoming a missionary was a narrow spiritual motive, remarking "... in those days you were fed on a tight spiritual diet, and you responded". He typifies the historical shift in the meaning of mission and moves away from "the older style of preaching to the people" and saving souls. He now sees his motivation as a commitment to Christ and to spread the good news. Paul says mission is about "... working with people and seeing that they have lots of values that we might have been blind to in the past". He has come to see mission as a more holistic activity, which is "helping people to enjoy life, to be happy in life, to have better relationships and to have the kind of quality of life that lifts them out of the subsistence level, call it the poverty trap if you wish".

The missionary sisters share the sense of vocation and calling that the priests have. Patricia and Mary had a 'calling' but added that they set out to help people wherever they could. However, in comparison with the two older priests the sisters have altruistic motives. Again, the altruistic motives are indicative of what the post-colonial theorists see as 'othering'. This mix of calling and altruism is best illustrated by Eileen who says her mission is "... reaching out to people and satisfying their needs rather than satisfying ours". The religious beliefs of the missionary sisters underpin their altruistic motivations. One clear example of this comes from Joan who spoke about giving herself to God and how she wanted to go away and work with the poor. Joan acknowledges that the idea of mission has changed. She says it has gone from "purely evangelising and sacramentalising to spreading the good news. While such notions of modernised evangelisation inform their discourse of Personal Development, a puzzle remains why they do not shift substantially from a discourse which they broadly share with the two older priests. Cormac the development worker had both personal and professional motivations which included travel and to get further medical experience.

#### **5.4.2 Situated Learning and Work Experiences**

The work practices of the respondents in this group are focused on service provision and are dominated by the institutional setting in which they are located. The missionaries are engaged in the usual work of religion and social care provision (Humphreys, 2010), which

has long been the tradition of religious work in Ireland (Fahey, 2000), and the religious institution looms large over their work. The work practices of the missionaries reflect the gendered roles within the Catholic church, where the sacramental is mainly carried out by priests and social care performed by the sisters. As a result, the identities of the missionary sisters are bound up in their occupational roles. As one missionary sister put it "... priests are never asked what they do, whereas sisters are always asked what is their occupation". This exemplifies how the identity of the religious sister is formed by the patriarchal institution of the Catholic Church (Brock, 2010). While the sisters' identity is shaped by this institution in contrast to the priests, their identity is also forged by their occupational roles. Moreover, as will be outlined below, these roles give them greater freedom compared with the priests, a freedom wherein they can fully embrace the idea of mission as witness, being with people, listening and sharing with them (Dorr, 2000).

Eamon and Seamus, the two more conservative priests, are engaged in the traditional, institutional work of missionary priests. They fulfilled and embraced the vocational role of the missionary priest which, in the 1960s, "... was to get people to church, administer the sacraments and, when we had a command of the language, teach the catechism" (Waldron, 2013, p.9). Parish administration and building churches were two more important aspects of their work. These missionaries raised funds for these endeavours from their own religious societies and from their broad network of family and friends back in Ireland. An example of the instrumental nature of this work is given by Eamon who says their job was to maintain the flock they had converted. This instrumentalism ultimately produced priests who were engaged in ways of doing things which have "become institutionalized within routines" (Roberts, 2006, p.630). Eamon and Seamus belong to what Roberts (2006, p.629) regards as a group that have become static in terms of their knowledge base and are resistant to change. These two priests, Seamus and Eamon, are learning through practice in ways that are reinforced within the institution of the Catholic Church, so much so that they do not consider their missionary work as development. They see themselves as priests and nothing else and this links back to their idea of mission centred on conversion and administering the sacraments.

Paul, the third priest, seems to be trying to move away from the traditional institutional role of a missionary priest. Paul's sense of altruism feeds into his identity and guides his work practices as a missionary priest and his identity is also constructed through his occupation as a teacher coupled with his priestly duties. These religious duties come

second to his role in education. Paul remarked that he did the parish work 'badly'. His work in education primarily shapes his identity and provides meaning for him. Paul has had various roles in education from teaching to school principal. He has also been involved in building schools. He observed: "There's a lot of development work from building a school, from class say up to Senior Certificate level, science laboratories and libraries, that kind of thing, getting some more houses built for staff, those activities, mostly structural". The villagers "... are involved in building the schools because they are very strong about what they want for their future". An important part of his work in education was helping teachers there to improve the quality of their work. Paul derives huge satisfaction from his work in education and regards this as meaningful work (Roth, 2015). He sees his role in education as, firstly, "... helping some people to become materially richer". Secondly, there is a formative aspect to education. which "... even if it's just the witness of the teachers themselves, you know, their commitment. That will at least wash off the students if nothing else". These reasons are why he sees education as essential and continues to work in it. Paul regards his work as a missionary as development work and for him education "... is fundamental in any concept of mission work or development work for that matter because they're two of a kind almost". Thus, from his work in education Paul sees it playing a fundamental role in personal development. His focus is on improving the quality of people's lives through education and this reflects the changes in Catholic social teaching which, in the post Vatican II era, emphasised human development. Pope Paul the VI, in his document on the 'progress of people', spoke about development being "for each and all, the transition from less human conditions to those which are more human" (Dorr, 2012, p.158).

Joan, like Paul, sees her work as development and is the only missionary sister in this group who worked in education. As is the case with all the missionary sisters I spoke to Joan is defined by her occupational specialism. She worked as a teacher and principal in what she describes as a basic boarding school. She recalls how "little by little through Government funding and money from benefactors" they were able to build a library and a laboratory. The school had a school garden, where the students worked on the plot. This was an important part of their education and the school had education classes for self-reliance. The challenge for Joan "... was to find teachers though they had some Irish volunteers from APSO". Joan felt the main achievement in her work was educating the students and seeing them going on to university.

For both Paul and Joan their work in education has played an important part in shaping their identities. The work practices of these two missionaries have helped to shape their understanding of development in terms of personal development. They have gathered knowledge and an understanding of education both in terms of functionings (having an education) and the capability (the opportunities education provides). Paul and Joan appear to have participative working relations with teachers and other staff in their schools. These participative relations do not feature in their understanding of development. This appears to be, at least in part, because these participative relations are hidden behind the hierarchical nature of the schools where both Joan and Paul are principals. Therefore, the practice of education work, in the absence of other factors, appears to focus their understandings on Personal Development processes.

The two other missionary sisters worked in health care. Their work is very much in line with a vision of mission which is doing things for people (Dorr, 2000) as opposed to helping people do things for themselves. In many respects these missionaries are working within the framework of the 'civilising mission' first introduced in colonial times. These sisters mainly worked in institutional settings such as hospitals and clinics where they had limited resources and the working conditions were very basic. Mary first went to Africa in 1955 and recalls the challenges they encountered. They worked in overcrowded conditions, always struggling to acquire drugs and had to make up their own intravenous fluids. As a nurse and midwife Patricia remembers the difficulties of working with limited electricity. She also had to contend with using a generator that was controlled by the priest. The problem was he decided when it would be turned off. Patricia recalls that "... you might be in the middle of delivering a baby and you would have to send word over to him to ask him to leave it on. If he was in a good humour, he would leave it on, if he wasn't, he wouldn't". She describes these priests as old style. This is a striking example of the gendered and hierarchical roles within the Catholic Church. It also illustrates the misogyny of this priest, not only towards the sister working as a midwife but also the mother giving birth. A common theme for the missionary sisters was having to carry out procedures that they were not necessarily trained for.

Patricia gives an example of where her belief system assisted her in her work. She recalls how, when faced with a difficult childbirth, with no doctor to assist her, she relied upon her medical experience and prayer to get her through. For Patricia it was the combination of her religious faith and her medical skills that created meaning for her in that situation.

The stories of the challenging medical experiences illustrate how these missionaries were gaining in competence (Wenger, 2010) and learning through practice. It was a practice of medicine which was "institutionalized within routines" (Roberts, 2006, p.630), which made do with the limited resources within their institutional setting. Working in the small hospital setting provided the missionary sisters with a degree of occupational autonomy, although in settings where they had very few resources (including suitable training or access to expert advice).

These sisters, in commonality with Eamon and Seamus, did not consider their work as development work. The instrumental nature of their work and the medical experiences contributed to an understanding of development which emphasised health and the functioning aspects of health. Overall, the institutional location, as well as work practices and their ideologies are important elements in the situated learning of the respondents in this group, which directed them towards the instrumental provision of (very valuable) help directly to local people.

As outlined above Cormac is an outlier in this group. His development thinking is limited to personal development and well-being and is similar to the missionaries in the nature of this personal group. His work experiences also align with those of the missionary sisters in this group. Cormac's work practices are heavily influenced by these professional motivations and foster a view of development which focuses on the well-being of the individual in terms of health seen as a functioning and achievement. He went to Africa in 1995 and worked in a hospital. He observed that he got far more experience working in this setting than he would have had back in Ireland. The practice of medicine was also different because people came to hospital in the later stages of the illness. Cormac talked about how he learned about development from the type of diseases that people had when they came to the hospital. Again, his focus is on people being healthy, the functioning aspect of health, and this is amplified by his experience being largely within the four walls of the hospital and its immediate occupational communities.

#### **5.4.3 Local Communities and Social Relations**

Certainly, the individualised developmental nature of education and the instrumental character of healthcare provision encouraged the focus on Personal Development among the respondents in this group. However, work does not happen in a vacuum and it is



important to consider to what extent their processes of learning were shaped by interactions with the wider social world. The parish structures and the institutional community living of the respondents in this group shape their relationships with the wider community. In many respects they are rather cut off from the local communities and the relationships are conducted through the formal service delivery of their institution. Therefore, the interdependence of the respondents in this group and the social world is limited. This implies that their learning and identity construction is limited to the social relations within the institutional settings they inhabit. It must be noted that the missionary sisters in this group believe that their work with the local communities, whether in teaching or medicine, brings them closer to the people compared with priests. In describing themselves as being closer to the people the sisters believe they are more accessible to them.

Most of the respondents in this group worked and lived in rural settings in their respective African countries. For the most part the missionaries lived within their own community. They had simple lifestyles which revolved around work and prayer. They had limited and formal contacts with the local community. Mary remembers that "there was no social aspect as we know it. We would go out to houses, meet them and they'd invite you in and you'd go in and sit down around the fire and chat but that was all". The missionary sisters, however, believe they are well regarded in the communities where they live and work. Outside of his parish work Eamon had little interaction with the local community. His social life was with his fellow missionary priests. The missionary sisters also relied heavily on their own community and tended to socialise and talk about their work with the sisters with whom they lived. This provided them with a support network and gave them a sense of belonging.

Working and living in these rural isolated areas gave the missionaries insights into the poverty and the struggles of the local people. These experiences also helped to shape their understanding of development. Eileen spoke about her experiences in Tanzania where "poverty is a big issue, definitely, and drought. We have had drought for three years. So that really plays havoc with the people because the people are literally starving, you know, they can't work because they don't have the energy". Joan recalls how "... the people are very dependent on agriculture. They were just scratching a living and I learned early on how important water was". The missionaries spoke of the capacity of the people to cope with the harshness of their lives. But, Eileen observed, "... they have

a great acceptance that we wouldn't have, you know, they're satisfied with very little". These experiences generated a practical reason within these practitioners to be concerned with the well-being of people (Sayer, 2011) in the communities where they work. They see through their work and life experiences the lack of social services and the need for the basics in life such as health and education. Joan, very much like Paul, sees the importance of education in empowering people. This practical reason illustrates how they have interpreted the work they do. This also feeds into their discourses of development and their focus on education and its fundamental role in personal development. However, their relatively limited relations with local communities limited the connection of this personal development focus to broader questions.

#### **5.4.4 Reflexivity, Agency and Change**

Eamon and Seamus did not reflect on their work and life on the missions in any meaningful way. They believe that they carried out the work they were sent to do. Paul, on the other hand, engages in reflexivity and a questioning of himself (Smirl, 2012; Roth, 2015), his values, goals and work practices. He reflects on how he approaches his work, and how he is now more aware of relating to teachers and to working as a team. His work experiences in education have led him to conclude that there is a link between missionary work and development. As a result, his understanding of mission has changed. He has moved away from thinking about conversion and embraced the spiritual and the social aspects of mission (Bosch, 1991). Paul's missionary identity (as priest and teacher), his values and beliefs, contribute to his views on the material and the spiritual aspects of personal development. Paul's work experiences in education shaped his view on the importance of education and empowerment significantly.

The missionary sisters in this group are in many ways negotiating and contesting a sense of self as women, as Catholics and as religious (MacCurtain, 2006). They reflect upon how their identity as missionaries is constructed through their gendered occupational roles, as they are not just sisters, they are nurses and teachers. Their identity as Catholics is illustrated by how important prayer is in their lives as missionaries. Generally, the missionaries in this group do engage in reflexivity even in a limited way. They reflect on who they are as missionaries and the interpretive frames that guide their work and construct their identities. Nonetheless, the mix of religious and occupational identities

that are significant for them tend to provide a framework that reinforces a focus on Personal Development as a goal of their work.

#### 5.4.5 Summary

In summary this missionary ‘personal group’ conforms largely to a traditional ‘missionary’ life history. For the most part, they are an elderly cohort who are retired. The priests see mission in religious terms whereas the sisters see mission as a calling and a desire to help. The missionary motivations tend to reflect the role of the Church in social service provision which was common in the Ireland of the 1950s and 1960s. These motivations lead to work practices which are based on a religious model of hierarchical service whether in the medical field or the church. There are gendered and hierarchical roles within the missionary community, where missionary sisters are defined according to their occupational specialism. What is clear is that work, particularly for those with an occupational specialism, is the main source of knowledge about the issues facing the local communities in which they work and hence the focus on personal development and basic needs. The instrumental and institutional nature of the work, particularly in the health area, help to foster an understanding of development which focuses on the functioning aspects of health (being healthy). The identity of these missionaries is shaped by their practice and through the competence they have gained. The missionaries have a definite sense of belonging to the institutional world of their community and have formal and restricted relations with the communities outside their work. There is a sense that the institutional settings help to reinforce the religious values and beliefs of the missionaries and provides meaning for them. There is one exception in this group, Paul, who resists this religious ideology and seeks meaning through his work as a teacher – which means that his biography is somewhat closer to that of the sisters. Overall, the combination of religious ideology and hierarchical, formal work structures explains the narrow range of development discourses lacking in critical awareness, limited to personal development and dimensions of well-being.

## 5.5 Learning about Development for the Missionary ‘Personal Practice’ Group

We now turn to our second development discourse, where a group of missionaries add participative practices and critiques of development practices to personal development and religious themes.

### 5.5.1 Overview and Profile of the Missionary Personal and Practice Group

Table 5.3 below gives the profile of the missionaries in this group. In contrast with the first missionary group, the majority of the respondents are a younger generation who first went overseas post-Vatican II and are still working in the field. All of the respondents worked in Africa with one exception, Ruth, who also worked in Latin America. This group is predominantly made up of religious sisters who work in the health sector, similarly to the personal group. One of the two missionary priests has no occupational specialism, the other has experience in community development and humanitarian relief work.

**Table 5.3 Profile of the Missionary Personal and Practice Group**

Pseudo Name	Region	Occupation	Age	Date first went	No of years	Still working
Maura	Africa	Health	70	1984	30+	Yes
Ruth	Latin America	Health	63	1976	30+	Yes
Mark	Africa	Community Development	60	1971	30+	Yes
John	Africa	Priest no specialism	65	1970	30+	Yes
Jean	Africa	Health	60	1970	38	No
Breda	Africa	Health	53	1985	20+	Yes
Pauline	Africa	Health	77	1960s	30+	No
Helen	Africa	Health	76	1963	32	No
Annemarie	Africa	Health	73	1966	30+	Yes

### 5.5.2 Origins and Motivations

The missionaries in this group are similar to their missionary counterparts in the personal group, in that they were motivated by altruism and a sense of a calling to go overseas and work with the poor. Helen explains her reasons for becoming a nun and going to Africa and states: "So I myself decided to give my life to God and I thought there was a difference then between God and the world and I would do the hardest thing and go out to Africa where I felt the people there needed my help more than the people at home". Another example is Maura who says, "I suppose, I felt the call to a religious life not knowing what it meant from Adam, but I wanted to be a missionary". Ruth was very interested in going to South America and "at that time there was a big call from Pope John the XXIII to go to South America". The priests share these motivations and have the same predispositions as Paul in the personal group. John joined his congregation because he felt that he "... was being called to Africa. to bring good news to people in Africa". Mark is an example of someone who initially went overseas with the 'othering' and conversion mentality. He quickly changed his views to the modern version of mission. Mark recalls how he went "...to help the poor, but it was more a vision of these poor African people, they need to get Christianity, they need to get development. they need to get this and that. We had this image of the poor black babies". Mark was keen to point out that his motivations changed and he attributes this to the experiences he has had in his life in Africa. His motivations changed from wanting to do or to help to being with and learning from the people.

The sense of 'othering' is evident in how Breda and Annemarie see mission which is 'doing' whereas the rest of the missionaries in this group embrace the broader sense of mission as being and sharing with people. For Breda mission is "... working with and for the people to build them up and to give them the dignity which is their right and show them in different ways the love of God". Ruth in comparison argues that mission "... is friendship and being open to the good news that other people have as well as realising you have something to bring". The idea of sharing is also evident in Jean's definition of mission which is "... a sharing a mutual sharing and give and take, because I received quite a bit, my life was enriched by being in Ethiopia".

The priests in this groups share this vision of mission and Mark defines mission as "... something like being present with the people, getting into the skin of the people, living

with them, learning from them, building on what they have, you know, involving people in their own solutions, owning how they move forward and in that process of becoming more human". He says: "When I went first in 1971, I was going to do something for these poor people and I was bringing them education. I was bringing them Christianity. I was going to convert the pagans. I was going to add something to their lives". Instead, he saw, through living and working amongst the people "... the wonderful gifts they have and then beginning to realise that I have nothing to give apart from being present with them, where they are". Whilst these missionaries have what Bradbury (2013) calls the concern for the well-being of others there is also sense of the paternalist attitudes and 'othering' expressed in terms such as 'doing something for these poor people' or 'bringing them Christianity'.

The identity of these missionaries is constructed through their idea of mission and the religious community they belong to. Breda for example said she joined her congregation because she felt they were different and moving forward and also moving with the needs of the people. The organisation "... still speaks to where I'm at now". In general Breda believes religious communities are the scaffolding of the church because they are in touch with the needs of the people. Helen believes the role of religious sisters in the church "... is to be prophetic and to be liminal, to be out at the edge". Highlighting the hierarchical gendered roles within the Catholic Church and commenting on the difference between nuns and priests, Helen says "they seem stuck in the rules and regulations". She adds: "We were brought up very dependent on the clergy. Canon law is for old men in Rome and we must sort of liberate ourselves from being too dominated by the clergy and by clericalism". Again, the gendered roles in religion come to the fore. The religious sisters, similar to the sisters in the previous groups, emphasise the positive aspects of their gendered roles and explicitly critique the patriarchal elements of church organisation. Indeed, their gendered critique connects to a different view of development as it raises questions of participation and critique of practice. Partly because of this, but also due to the post Vatican II ideas of the priests, these missionaries bring a more expansive notion of the local people in to their motivations for doing development work.

### 5.5.3 Situated Learning and Work Experiences

There are gendered and hierarchical roles within the missionary community, which are similar to those experienced in the personal group where missionary sisters are defined according to their occupational specialism. The work practices of the personal missionary groups which are based on a religious model of hierarchical service have been replaced with more participative practices in this group. These work practices are indicative of what Roth (2015) describes as 'feminine' behaviour, which is mentoring, communication and team building. This group had wider contacts with other actors and greater exposure to development practice, which helped to form their views and criticisms of development practice.

Even though these missionaries have a wide variety of work experiences a common thread is the participative nature of these practices. The medical practices in the areas of primary health care and occupational therapy are located amongst the people in their local communities and are participative in nature. Ruth recalls that "primary health care was like, you know, talking to the people and getting their views, not imposing our Western ideas on them and reaching a more, a wider group of people". Ruth elaborates on the participative aspects of primary care and says "... when you get into primary health care it's quite different because then you're, less professional in a way and people have a lot of knowledge about their own lives and health as well and taking that on board and the participation of the people is so important. When they participate and they're involved, they own all the decisions and everything is much better". Helen gives a good description of the work in primary health where:

"The first thing we did was a survey of a target area that we would take on as an outreach from the hospital. We had been doing outreach, but we were just going to see mothers and children, we didn't go the extra couple of yards to know can you not do something about this yourself. So, then we went out to the villages at night and then we would have our chat and talk about water. Where is the water in this town? Then when we had a chance to come back another day to see where was their water source and show them where it was causing them diarrhoea."

Engaging in these practices also gave these missionaries insights into the need to look beyond health provision to other quality of life issues such as access to clean water and education. Maura puts it succinctly when she says "... there is no point in just giving them medicine if there is no food at home". The participative and 'feminine' practices are further illustrated by Breda when she talks about the need to listen to people

explaining that "... medical people have an orientation to treat and they know the answers whereas it is the people themselves who have the answers, the people know what they need". For Breda, this type of outreach medical work is geared towards a preventative model of medicine. These participative work practices stand in contrast to the limitations of working in an institutional setting. Ruth for example identifies the medical and development pitfalls in the purely hospital-led model of medical delivery. She notes: "When you were in the hospital or a clinic you know, you had that institution there and people came in to you", and she goes further "... the very institutional kind of life cuts you off from the real life of the people".

It is noticeable that, while these sisters are involved in health work, the organisation of that work is quite different from that of the sisters in the personal group – they are more likely to work as part of a group, to have a public health or community component to their work and to be part of more complex public systems of healthcare (often linked to community development).

Allied to the participatory practices outlined above is the education and training provided by these sisters as part of their work. Capacity building and empowerment are key goals of these activities. The education activities tie in with a view of personal development which is focused on capabilities and the opportunities people have. Breda and Helen gave training on ante-natal care and Breda recalls how they taught the women "... how to do safe deliveries and how to recognise when they should send somebody for hospital delivery". Helen recounts how "... we trained old ladies then to do a clean delivery and we would have to discuss with the chief who he would recommend to take the training". This quote from Helen also highlights the cultural sensitivities of how she went about her work, having to consult with the local chief. Another part of Helen's work was in nurse training and she observes that this was part of her pastoral work. Here she insisted on the quality of patient care no matter who the patient was, how sick they were or how old they were. This highlights the values that Helen brings to her work, focusing on the respect and dignity of the patient.

In her community development practices Jean worked with women's groups. Education played a part in her work as an occupational therapist in Ethiopia. In her outreach work with lepers, for example, there were "... certain patients who would need to come for exercise or treatment or education about their leprosy. It was educating them about what



had happened to them, to help them understand why they were getting ulcers, why they were losing some of their fingers or whatever”. Here too there is a difference from the personal group – whereas Paul had also been centrally involved in education this was in an individualised school setting, where these sisters’ educational work was focused as much on the community as on individuals.

The missionaries through these work practices were learning about the importance of participation and including the ‘subaltern’ voices. They also gained an awareness about not imposing western ideas and solutions.

The added dimension in the work experiences of these missionary sisters which contributes to their general critiques of development practice is the dealings they had with donor agencies. In general, they had positive experiences of working with them. However, they pointed to some of the deficiencies of these organisations which impacted on development practice. The whole evaluative process of the donors didn’t bother them. Breda recalls that they “... would have links with Oxfam and Cafod, Miseria, they would be the big ones and they would come to visit us on a regular basis and see the work that was going on and we would be reporting to them and financial statements and all of that”. The criticisms stemmed from what the sisters considered to be a lack of understanding on the part of donors of how projects work on the ground. Breda felt the donor agencies made assumptions about how projects would evolve. The agencies worked under the assumption that the locals would take on the maintenance of the well, for example. She said that this did not happen. The agencies were out of touch with the local realities. In a similar vein Helen expresses concern about how the reports she sent back on the effectiveness of a project were used. The agencies would, according to her, try and implement them elsewhere which she considered to be "...an extension of stupidity. You can’t take one thing to another”. Again, these experiences gave them first-hand knowledge of the pitfalls of eternally constructed development projects which don’t involve the ‘subaltern’ and are merely imposing western ideas.

For the religious sisters their occupations are part and parcel of their identities as missionaries. Ruth, for example, says that they always considered what they were doing as medics “was part of the pastoral work of a parish”, illustrating the link between improving the living conditions of their communities and propagating the word of God (Deneulin and Bano, 2009). In common with the sisters in the personal group, this cohort

see a positive aspect to their occupations and gendered roles within the church. They believe their roles bring them closer to the people compared with priests. To illustrate this point Maura gives an example of the lack of empathy between the priest and their parishioners which she witnessed. She says these priests don't bother to be close to the people and "... will rarely show any interest or want to hear anything about AIDS, they just don't talk about it". Furthermore, when the people attend Church, they neither hear or receive any compassion. According to Maura probably feel judged as a consequence of this lack of welcome or consolation. Overall, she says "... it just means that they're being judged and excluded". Maura finds this difficult to comprehend when the Gospel has plenty to say about the sick.

John and Mark, the two priests in this group, have had quite different experiences of being missionary priests in Africa. John's work is very much in the mould of the traditional priest and he has similar work practices to those of Eamon and Seamus in the personal group. Mark, on the other hand, has had a variety of experiences including work as a relief coordinator. Mark classifies his work as human development work.

John's development narrative includes criticisms of development practice, which can be traced back to his work in Africa and the dealings he had with donors. John went to Kenya in 1970 and was teaching in a government-run secondary school. After a year and a half, he decided to leave the school and he set up a parish. His work involves building churches and carrying out the usual sacramental duties. John moved to Malawi in 1983 and has set up what he calls small Christian communities. However, there is a vagueness about what these Christian communities do. John claims the role of these communities is to "... maybe reach out into the larger community to maybe assist with the poor or with the sick or with the old". The ethos of these communities would appear to be altruistic. John sees his role within these communities as deepening the faith of their members. His work in building churches and schools has brought him into contact with donors. John through his engagement with donors relied on more formalised funding compared with the missionaries in the personal group who relied upon their own organisations and donations from Ireland for their building projects. John questioned the specifications that donors imposed on his building projects. He was of the opinion he could have achieved far more with the money if he had been left to his own devices.

Mark's journey as a missionary is very different from John's. It has had many facets. Mark has been working in a variety of jobs and regions which have shaped his identity. He has also had traumatic and stressful experiences which is a feature of the experiences of many aid workers (Roth, 2015). An example of this is his work in Southern Sudan, where he ran an awareness development programme which coincided with the second Sudanese civil war. He recalls that they "... kept moving between the factions in the war and it was hard to do anything constructive and everything we tried to do was kind of destroyed". After Sudan he went to a refugee camp in Uganda. He moved there permanently in 1995. He did a six-month stint in Rwanda at the end of the genocide and worked as a relief co-ordinator working with a team of missionary sisters. In his work as a relief coordinator, he was responsible for a lot of the development at that time "... because the agencies withdrew all their personnel during the dangerous time of war and conflict". He worked closely with various NGOs, observing "... we also would have been listened to because for a time we were the only ones inside Sudan and we had a good respect from them". Mark saw how the NGOs operate and felt that there was waste in how they went about their work. His role as a relief coordinator clearly had a bearing on his understanding of development and his criticism of development practice. Nonetheless, he reflected on why the people asked him to be a priest rather than a relief worker and says:

"I felt when they asked me, they were trying to cope with the whole confusion in their lives, perhaps guilt, but certainly confusion, you know, that they were part of a church, they prayed together, they were together and there the cancer of fear building up in the community into a situation where they can be forced and told to massacre and kill those whom they were beside in the church and they did do that and then again there is guilt afterwards. Because I felt that deep down in their hearts, they knew they should never have done it but it's almost like... I suppose again like a cancer, that it keeps on eating away at the confidence of a people and they stay in that you know and they stay in their anger".

These have contributed to his understanding of development and its particular focus on the person and religious dimensions such as dignity of the person.

For the most part the work experiences of this group of missionaries have been quite different from the personal group. The work practices in the area of primary health care and other outreach programmes for example give them first-hand experience of medical and development practices which are participative in nature and they are listening to the 'subaltern' voices. As noted above Ruth describes the participative nature of primary care, where you are "...with the people..., talking to the people and getting their views".

Engaging in these practices also gives these missionaries insights into the need to look beyond health provision to other quality of life issues such as access to clean water and education. The well-being of people is the core of their mission. Their work practices also give them insights into the practices of donors and an awareness of the problems associated with the imposition of western ideas.

#### **5.5.4 Local Communities and Social Relations**

The local communities outside the work setting also have a bearing on the missionaries' understanding of development. Like the previous group, they are embedded in a variety of social structures from engagement with the local communities they serve to the communities they belong to and the support networks they have. Again, the lived experience amongst the local communities had a significant bearing on their identity and their understanding of development.

In comparison with the personal group the majority of the missionaries in this group are embedded in the local communities where they work. Breda who is a missionary, describes how living on their own, away from the institutional setting of the convent, made them stand on their own two feet and really drove their relationship with the local community. She recalls we "...were left at our own wits' end. We had to learn about generators. We had to learn about cars. We had to learn about everything". As a result, Breda describes how she "... had to learn to depend on the people and it was the best thing ever because I no longer had a barrier between me and them". She goes on to say "... doors were always open and I respected them and they respected me".

The importance of being with and accepted by the people is echoed by Mark. He describes the choices he made when living in a refugee camp, where he "... decided to live sort of the poverty of the people, I deliberately didn't have resources or kind of material resources or funding. I would feel in a refugee camp as a brother, I would feel the more I would see them as brothers and sisters as I do. The more they accept me as a brother you know". There is however a tension between being available for people and creating dependency and this is illustrated by Jean who felt that there was a struggle to be available for people but not create a dependency.

The religious sisters believe that, as a consequence of the local social relations generated through their work, they are well regarded in these communities. They have gained a considerable reputation from this work and Ruth, for example, believes they "... had a good name as people giving a service", indicating how work and community relations are often intertwined. In Latin America Ruth thinks they are accepted by the communities and she feels like they are partners with the local community groups they work with.

However, there is another side to these social relations where missionaries are seen as a foreigner which affects how they go about their work. Ruth gives an example, from her time in Africa, where she recalls how on a few occasions she had the impression that she was a foreigner and this feeling prevented her from saying certain things. She remembers she felt this way "... especially when it came to people at government level you know, you realise that, you know, you couldn't say the things maybe that you would like to say. You really felt I am a foreigner here and I have to obey the rules". This was frustrating for her "... because when I first went there, there were three missionaries who were thrown out because they spoke up. And I remember saying, why don't we get together and do something and, you know, that was kind of the response, well if you do you get thrown out".

The lived experience of the missionaries amongst the communities is a source of knowledge about development issues. These experiences generated a practical reason which is concerned with the well-being of people (Sayer, 2011). They learn through their life experiences about the poverty that these communities suffer. These respondents gave detailed descriptive accounts of the poverty and the struggles the local people endure. Breda states bluntly: "Life for the people in Northern Nigeria is very basic, really very basic and it hasn't changed very much". Jean mentions that "... there was an awful lot of poverty in Ethiopia, there would be a small group at the top who would be very wealthy, but the majority of the country would be poor. Now they were mainly subsistence farmers". For John "... the life of the people in Malawi is extremely tough. It's the third poorest country in the world, how they survive every day is like a miracle because they have so little". Maura describes her current posting as "... one of the most beautiful places in the world". However, she says that life for the majority of people here is "... very harsh really and people are poor and there are no social services whatsoever". Ruth recalls: "It was really tough, yeah, and people were just surviving". She also described the famine she witnessed in Africa where:

“The people would be short of food, always they would have one crop a year of corn or whatever and by the end of the year everything was gone and you know they would just be hungry for months. The women would end up ploughing the fields for somebody who could afford to pay them so that they would get food for the day for the children”.

Ruth's life journey in the development field took her from Africa to Latin America. Certainly, her knowledgeability (Wenger-Trayner, 2015) and experience of participative practices were strengthened by her time in Latin America. These different areas of practice illustrate how cultural considerations play a role in shaping the respondents' discourses of development. Ruth is working in a city of one million people with very little infrastructure. Her role is coordinating an integrated health programme in a parish. She believes strongly that her work in Latin America brings her closer to the people, stating "... we are constantly out there with the people and we know really a lot of stuff and they talk to us and I feel more equal with them". Ruth explains the difference between working in Africa and Latin America. In Latin America, according to her, "the people had this culture of being in groups". In Africa, on the other hand:

"It was very difficult, like we would have health outreach but there was no connection, there was no committee, it wasn't, we weren't empowering the people to the same extent, we were sort of caring in a way but not leading them, there was no building up of the group there or seeing their whole situation, which we were able to do in Latin America."

Ruth's engagement with the wider social world in Latin America is the parish structure. She talks about the benefits of this parish-based community and says "... you know, we're very much part of the parish and there are endless meetings and you're involved with all the groups that are in the parish but you do your own thing but, you know, you do it in connection with others".

The self-realisation and self-identity of these missionaries is enhanced by the support networks they relied upon. For Ruth and Maura, the missionary sisters, the support network of their own missionary communities is very important too. Their self-identity as missionaries is tied up with these organisations, which provide them with common values and networks of solidarity. They spoke about how their community network provided the opportunity to reflect on issues such as the difficulties and dilemmas (Roth, 2015) of their work as missionaries and development workers.

The descriptive accounts of the community relations outlined above illustrate the complex set of social relations that exist between the missionaries and the communities they serve from perceptions, to roles and issues of closeness. These descriptive accounts of the social relations are testimony to how they understand and how they practice their mission differently from the personal group – with a focus on being with the people and listening to the cries of the poor (Dorr, 2012).

#### **5.5.5 Reflexivity, Agency and Change**

Reflexivity, agency and change are more obvious features of the life journey of these missionaries. The descriptive accounts of the work practices and their lives as missionaries illustrate the degree to which these respondents engage in reflexivity. They are examples of subjects who deliberate “... on how some item, belief, desire, idea or state of affairs pertains or relates to itself” (Archer, 2003, p.26). Ruth reflected on the cultural differences she experienced between Africa and Latin America. She talked about how there was more of a culture of working in groups and as a community in Latin America and how this impacted on her work as a missionary, which became far more participative. Ruth is illustrative of a development worker whose biography has informed her experiences and practices. She has what Eyben (2012, p.1419) calls “curiosity to find out what local reality looks like through local people’s eyes. And ... the intrinsic interest of the job itself to learn about the local context”.

Mark also looked back on the experiences and contexts that confronted him. He questions his motivations, predispositions and the job he is doing. It is clear that the traumas he witnessed and how he dealt with them and reflected upon them led to changes in his work practices and his sense of identity and his formation as a missionary. Mark, like Paul in the personal group, went on the missions at a time of change within the Catholic Church post Vatican II. His reflexivity comes from the mismatch between his reality of life as a missionary and the way in which he was trained, where the emphasis was on the sacramental aspect of priestly duties.

The religious sisters reflect on their work and roles as missionaries. They highlight the differences between themselves and priests. They also reflect on the nature of the institutional setting and how this structures their work. As noted above the sisters reflect

on their roles as missionaries and make comparisons with their male counterparts. Like the sisters in the personal group, they see their identity is tied to their occupation and structure through the social and spiritual aspects of this work. They also reflect on how their roles bring them closer to the people.

In common with the sisters in the personal group there are mixed views as to whether they would classify their work as development work. The missionary sisters had different views as to whether they would define their missionary work as development. Ruth, for one, is very clear and states that her work is human development work. Maura, on the other hand, did not classify her work as development. Even though her work would appear to have a development focus as noted above, she firmly sees it as providing medical services. To clarify this further, she argues that if they were training then that would be development but they are not, so therefore their work is not development. This illustrates how religious sisters assess their own work differently, whilst sharing a capabilities and participative view of development. Maura sees her work as service provision, as a means to an end, and while she does not reject the idea of development, she distinguishes it from service provision.

Further education and training undertaken by the missionaries have been important for the process of reflexivity, agency and learning about development. The education and training have different impacts for different people but, overall, these courses have helped to improve their work practices. Breda has taken a number of courses and the primary health course made a big impression on her. As noted above it shifted her thinking away from a purely service delivery medical model. Helen tells a similar story about the impact of the public health course on her thinking and practices. She describes how she really "... got interested in health and development, health development, I got interested in health". The public health course gave her "... sociology, anthropology, learning and all that kind of thing and my little medical world blew apart". Breda also took APSO development courses which she didn't find useful. She makes a clear distinction between book knowledge and real-world knowledge and observes that "... in some ways I felt I could have taught them more than they actually were already trying to teach me. No, a lot of what they were talking about was from a book and from theory".

At times, extreme experiences or crises of identity can provoke unusually intense reflexivity. Mark illustrates the importance of biography (Eyben, 2012) and the legacies



(Billet, 2007) which have shaped his consciousness, self-development and contributed to his understanding of development. These legacies have been points of reflection for Mark and are part of the formation of his practical wisdom (Sayer, 2011) and how he defines himself as a missionary. He started his African journey in 1983 and the first point in his biography which shaped his consciousness came early on when he had what he calls a crisis. Like Paul in the personal group Mark was searching for meaning and identity. He recalls how:

“I was frustrated, I was lost, I was discovering in myself the illusions I came with you know weren’t working to help these poor Africans to bring Christianity to pagan Africa, to kind of bring education and all those illusions weren’t meaningful to what I was experiencing in Africa, because I found the people very deep in a spiritualism that we didn’t have even in our own country who were very much aware of God in their lives. So, it was kind of struggling in that crisis that I was in”.

He goes on to explain that “... it wasn’t a faith crisis, it wasn’t celibacy, and it was actually an identity crisis of I as a white priest in Africa”. Another important legacy and traumatic time in Mark’s life journey as a missionary happened in Rwanda. This experience made him question what he was doing and what his work as a missionary should be. He recalls standing over a mass grave “... and trying to say what am I about? What is mission about? What is Church about? Where are we failing? What are we really at”? He began to “... see that it wasn’t a relief co-ordinator they wanted actually; it was a priest”. He says from then on:

“I stopped sort of material development because as a priest there was confusion, the more I got involved in building schools and taking food into Sudan and relief and the whole war situation, and the more confused the people were about who I was as a priest and what the church was about.”

In reflecting on the question about his identity as a missionary arising from this experience Mark says: “I found Rwanda a very harrowing time but a time also that helped me, I suppose, sort myself out a bit better, you know, and get a different vision of perhaps my work in mission countries”. He then decided that his mission was "... to try to facilitate and help people experience their own dignity and in that even in discovering the presence of God that is perhaps asleep within them". Mark is still working in a refugee camp in Uganda where he continues to use the psychosocial method and is giving retreats. He is an example of what Roth (2015, p.97) sees as the situation aid workers find themselves in where “... paradoxically stressful and traumatic situation can result in burnout and PTSD, but can also contribute to personal growth if they can overcome it”.

Like Paul in the personal group, he too searched and found new ways of working as a missionary which provided meaning for him. Mark talks about how he overcame this crisis through Paolo Freire's Conscientisation programme, which introduced him to the Sacro-social method. Mark says this method is a problem-posing method and sees it as "... a kind of a facilitation of people to be energized into change according to their own way and their own vision of change". He uses this method "... to help motivate people and to help them get involved in their own way". In adopting this model into his missionary work Mark is engaging in participative practices. This way of working appealed to him "... in the sense that I didn't have answers anymore". The crisis Mark underwent led him to find new ways of working as a missionary which provided him with meaning and a sense of identity.

However, even among those with less extreme experiences and crises, this group engaged in much more obvious reflection on their work and lives than the personal group. An expanded set of motivations and experiences opened up greater space for reflexivity.

#### **5.5.6 Summary**

The missionary personal practice group emphasises the linking of personal formation and community participation and is, in many respects, an 'updating' but also a significant reformulation of the classic missionary approach. The majority of the respondents are still working in the field and first went overseas post-Vatican II. This group is predominantly made up of religious sisters who are based in Africa and work in the health sector, indicating the significant effect that gender roles and differences within the church play in shaping experiences and learning. This missionary group has a broader vision of mission which includes ideas such as doing, being and sharing with people (Dorr, 2000) and they have what Misesan Cara (2018) call a prophetic vision driven by a concern for a better life for all. Their work involves participative practices and is focused on immersive social service work embedded in the community.

These participative work practices tie in with the newer version of mission which is about dialogue and accompanying people. The medical work involves looking beyond health provision to other quality of life issues such as access to clean water and education. These missionaries had some dealings with donors and experienced some of the deficiencies in the practices of these organisations. As illustrated above, the context of the experience,

and being immersed in these contexts, is important in the process of learning. Similar to the missionaries in the personal group the focus of these respondents on personal development and the dimensions of well-being can be traced back to their life experiences in developing countries, where they witnessed the poverty, the poor health and education systems and the struggles of people to survive on a day-to-day basis. Further education and training undertaken by the missionaries have been important for the process of reflexivity, agency and learning about development. These courses have been focused on helping them to improve their work practices, rather than on political and policy issues as they are for some of the other groups. The totality of their experiences is focused on the practice aspects of development. This knowledge has contributed to their critical awareness such as the dangers associated with the imposition of western ideas and the need for listening to the ‘subaltern’,

### 5.6 Learning about Development for the ‘Personal and Practice’ Group

The third group is a group of development workers whose discourse brings together the personal and practice themes such as participation and critiques of development practices. As can be seen from Table 5.4 below, the majority of the respondents are based in Africa. The development workers are a younger cohort compared with the missionaries in the previous group. They first went overseas in the late 1980s and 1990s. The majority have spent two years overseas and are no longer working in the field. These workers were engaged in NGO work, education and community development. One development worker is an ex-missionary, who set up an NGO, and has spent twenty-five years in Latin America.

**Table 5.4 Profile of the Personal and Practice Group**

Pseudo Name	Region	Occupation	Age	Date first went	No of years	Still working
Martha	Africa	Education	50	1989	2	No
Betty	Africa	NGO Staff- Professional	60	1994	8	No
Robert	Latin America	NGO Staff / development Professional.	52	1982	25	Yes
Yvonne	Latin America	Community Development	34	1996	2	No
Margaret	Africa	Community Development	32	1999	2	Yes

### 5.6.1 Origins and Motivations

This group of development workers share the altruistic motivations and sense of 'othering' of the previous groups. However, in contrast with the vocational motivations of the missionary, personal motivations figure prominently and include personal goals, the sense of adventure and wanting to make a difference and are similar to the expatriate aid workers in Roth's (2015) study. Martha, a VSO volunteer in Africa, says her motivations "... were never very noble to start with and that she was really going for herself". She reinforces this point and differentiates herself from other VSO volunteers when she says: "I never got disillusioned as I never had high ideals. I noticed that some people in the VSO were really going to really help them and save the world. They got disillusioned particularly when they saw people in the same job as them with other agencies and getting loads more money".

Betty went out to Africa initially for personal reasons as an accompanying spouse. After a while she got a job with an Irish NGO. Margaret wanted to go to rural Africa and made the decision to go after completing her university education. She recalls how "I just felt I would learn a lot from a culture that was quite different so that was one and another I think was a sense of adventure, something different". Yvonne said she knew for a number of years that she wanted to get involved in development work overseas. She worked in a fair-trade shop in Ireland which also fuelled her interest in development. Robert is an interesting case. He had been a missionary for a number of years before deciding to leave his missionary organisation. He discovered that he couldn't do things he wanted to do and found the organisation very constraining. He recalls his reasons for leaving and says: "I didn't leave because I fell in love, I didn't want to be part of it anymore". Robert felt he "was stunted professionally", and "...didn't know how his contribution was valued". This career change has been pivotal in the construction of his development discourse.

Another aspect of entry into the development field is the training that development workers receive. As mentioned in Chapter Two training plays a role in raising awareness about development issues and how to go about their work. Training and preparation prior to going overseas was important for this group of development workers. Martha, for example, felt VSO seemed to put a lot of effort into training and the preparation of their personnel. For Martha, the training helped make her culturally aware of what to expect

in the African country she went to. This training shaped the expectations of these workers, in combination with a set of generally apolitical motivations where a general desire to help was explicitly combined with personal goals.

### 5.6.2 Situated Learning and Work Experiences

The development workers in this group have a wide variety of work experiences and include, education, health, community development and human rights work. These work practices are similar to those of the missionaries in the personal practice group. Again, participative practices and dealings with donors are prominent.

Participative practices are a feature of Betty's work, who went overseas as an accompanying spouse. She then volunteered her services to an Irish NGO and after a short period was appointed field officer and spent eight years in Africa. She describes how her job as a field officer "... entailed working with volunteers on the ground". She looked after volunteers when they arrived and briefed them on life in Africa. The participative element came to the fore when she placed volunteers with local agencies and recalls how she dialogued with them and "... worked hard so as to ensure that they got appropriate people for the work". This participative way of working paid dividends in terms of development practice. Betty describes the consequence of this approach, namely "...that all the assignments were being defined more and more in a specialised way and it meant that eventually there was no scope for the generalist". This reflects the changing nature of development work and the move towards using more specialised volunteers. There is a mismatch in Betty's work/life balance and she thinks, in hindsight, that she was "over-committed to it". She reflects the desire by many development workers to contribute as much as they can and to get the maximum out of their overseas experience. This over-commitment and is a feature of aid work, according to Roth (2015).

Over-commitment and over-working are also features of Martha's work practices in Africa. Reflecting on her time overseas, she feels that she was "was wonderfully dedicated" and did the job well. She also thinks that, because her assignment was only for two years, she might have overworked. Martha's work experiences were in the institutional setting of a university. Her work was lecturing and she had a lot of contact hours with the students. She found the standard in the university was very low, where admission to the Certificate course only required two O levels. Her impression was that

a lot of the students were very weak and this put added pressure on her. What surprised her was that the running of one of the courses was solely dependent on her. Her main achievement was setting up the courses and getting them up and running successfully. She was happy that when she left there was a structure in place that could be carried on by others. Another gratifying part of her work and her time there was raising the students to a certain standard, a standard that was verified by an external examiner from Scotland.

Three of the six development workers work, or worked, in community development, which involves problem solving and has a degree of a technical quality. Robert and Yvonne worked in Latin America and Margaret in Africa. Yvonne went to Latin America in 1996 and her work in community development included income generation projects. She describes "... working with thirteen women's groups or widows' groups, community groups all over the country that worked as artisans, making crafts that were sold overseas". Yvonne's work took place in a post-conflict situation and she describes how the project came about. She recalls that: "Concern had started the project in Southern Mexico in one of the refugee camps. There were quite a lot of Guatemalans living in Mexico". The project moved with the refugees as they returned to Guatemala. Yvonne gives a good account of the changing nature of development work and how contexts can change the structure of projects. Speaking about the project she worked on, she says: "Concern had strict criteria for working with groups". They "... initially had worked with widows because of the conflict". The return of the refugees and the changing political situation in Guatemala meant that Concern "just weren't able to be as strict". Through her work in community development Yvonne witnessed at first hand development in practice and this gave her a critical eye about how this practice works in reality. As mentioned in the previous chapter Yvonne describes the poorly constructed water project where the local people weren't trained to repair it.

In her work in human rights Yvonne also had what Roth (2015) calls vicarious traumatic experiences. She worked as an analyst, taking testimonies for the truth commission. This change in jobs is an important legacy for Yvonne's career and consciousness and she recalls how this "... was a big change in my life, that is when my whole focus in life for the past ten years has changed from development to human rights work". Yvonne was initially of the opinion that "human rights people forget everything else that happens and the focus on human rights and don't think about other aspects of life". However, her work in this area changed her opinion and for her, where she declares that she ended up loving

her job and "... I think I did a good job. It also opened up my eyes to human rights, I got sucked in like everyone else". Yvonne spoke about how reading the testimonies "of what people had survived these horrific things that I couldn't even fathom" had a huge impact on her. Like Betty and Martha, she also overworked and recalls how she worked ridiculously long hours, especially in her first year.

As mentioned above Robert is an ex-missionary. He had become disenchanted with the missionary life and was looking for new challenges. After leaving the missionary society he embarked on a new career and took courses in community development and development management. These courses led to work in the civil society or NGO sector. Robert set up an NGO in 2005 which runs two projects both of which have a participative focus. His education, training and work experiences have given him insights into, and knowledge of, development practice from theoretical and practical perspectives. Robert talked about all the pitfalls associated with setting up an NGO and the types of dealings he had with donors, negotiating and dealing with their requirements and fitting into their funding models.

The two projects cited are: a waste recycling project and a community development project. In Robert's opinion the objective of his community development project is to "... kind of accompany people especially those on the fringes, to enhance their capacities to strengthen their possibilities of advancing". Advocacy is an important aspect of the project and for him the aim "... is how to empower people to deal with the local authorities". He says his "vision of development is basically enhancing people's, local people's capacities to work towards their own development and to improve on their living conditions. He saw his role "to be a kind of catalyst or facilitator in that process". In the second project the NGO set up a recycling plant involving four communities and it now caters for 2500 people. The waste recycling plant "... could meet a need in the community of solving the problem of garbage or waste or rubbish and at the same time help it develop itself as a micro-enterprise". The aim of the recycling project is for it to be sustainable and participative. He envisaged it as a community service which would be "... managed by the local community, there would be a committee set up to run it". Robert's work and the principles with which he imbues his projects are focused on the capability approach to development focusing on the opportunities people have. Consequently, his values, education, training and work practices inform his understanding of development.

The critical element and concern for best practice also come from his training and work practices. Robert believes he has acquired a particular skill set in development management which has been enhanced by his work. His training gave him the skills to "... draw up projects and to implement projects and to monitor and evaluate". This training gave him the confidence to set up the NGO. Through his work he has gained practical wisdom and enhanced these skills. Robert is continuously furthering his knowledge about development in general and development practice in particular. He is learning through practice and gaining practical knowledge and wisdom.

Robert recounted his contacts with donor agencies in trying to get funding for his projects. He applied for funding to a number of donors including a combat poverty programme of the European Union. He observes that donors place a number of restrictions on their funding. He found, for example, that some donors will only fund a project for a year. He says the reason given for such short-term funding is that "there's this idea they don't want to create any sort of dependency". Robert counters this argument by saying that projects need investment and that "change doesn't happen overnight". He is in favour of more structured models of funding and contrasts the work of Misesan Cara with the previous way missionaries were funded, which was "give us the money and we know how best to spend it". This contrasts sharply with the experience of John, the missionary in the missionaries personal practice group, whose attitude towards funding is very much 'I know best how to spend it' and I don't need guidance on how to spend it.

At a personal level, Robert maintains that he works much harder now than he did as a missionary. He has developed a different skill set particularly in the area of development management. Robert is continuously furthering his knowledge about development in general and development practice in particular. He is learning through practice and gaining practical knowledge and wisdom, which is focused on an instrumental and managerialist approach to development.

Margaret worked in rural development in Africa. She draws attention to the participative processes involved in rural development, which she regards as "... an integrated approach to development, where the idea really is to start with people's needs and can cover a wide spectrum of activities". Her role was that of a co-ordinator and she worked with a team of field agents. She had a counterpart and they were supposed to work together and



coordinate activities in the project. She was the liaison person between the field and headquarters and would report to them on what they were doing. She also "... did a bit of firefighting as well, so when there were some critical problems, people would come to me and fairly futilely ask my advice". She describes in a positive light the work relations she had with the local staff who worked on the project. The description she gives of the work practices of these local staff mirror the attributes of aid workers in Roth's 2015 study, highlighting their passion and commitment and how hard they worked. She recalls, "... and despite the fact that they were project personnel, they did not seem to have the sense of being above the people and they had also a complete passion for the work that they did, they really believed in it. And they had huge energy for it, they worked tirelessly, the hours were ridiculous, they could be out until midnight, they worked weekends, they really put a lot into it". Even though Margaret socialized in her village, she spent a fair bit of her free time working. Margaret is another example of a development worker who experiences work/life balance issues, over-working and over-committed.

The descriptive accounts of the working lives of the development workers in this group have illuminated the various aspects of development practice encountered which have, as a consequence, contributed to their understanding of development. These work practices which have a technical problem-solving aspect to them have given them first-hand knowledge of the importance of participation, the best practices in development and the inadequacies of donor practices. The focus of these criticisms is on the instrumental aspects of development practice focusing on the means of delivering development. The testimonies of the working lives outlined above highlight the consequences of imposing Western ideas and practices. Thus, they are experiencing at first hand what the post-colonial theorists see as one of the failures of the practice of development. The participative practices and the testimony of the benefits of such practices demonstrates the importance of involving the 'subaltern' which the post-colonialists see as a requirement in development.

### **5.4.3 Local Communities and Social Relations**

As has just been discussed the social world of work and wider cultural considerations are a source of learning for the respondents in this group. Another important element which has contributed to their understanding of development is the lived experience and wider community relationships. This is particularly so for Martha, who talked at great length

about what she learned from her life experiences in Africa. Generally speaking, however, the relations with the wider community tend to be very formal in nature. How have the interactions with the wider social world impacted on the process of learning?

For the most part the development workers in this group are embedded in the communities in which they are working, even if relations tend to be relatively formal. Cormac is the exception in that he lived in the hospital compound and rarely visited the local town which was a few miles away. Cormac's work and life centred around the hospital compound and thus his development experiences were focused on his personal and professional motivations and, in particular, his desire to maximise his medical experiences and knowledge.

These development workers like the missionaries in the personal practice group also had experiences of formal relations with local people. Martha remarked that "... visiting local people in their houses was a more formal event and that you related to them in a very formal way". Betty spoke of how difficult it was to make friends and recalls "... how the aftermath of apartheid in Namibia made it hard to make friends, and partly also that Namibians socialise more in their families". She notes that "cultural considerations played a role here" and, for her, this manifested in the Afrikaners trying to recruit her into their way of thinking. Reflecting on the difference between his life as a missionary and that of a development worker Robert talked about how his former identity as a priest created a barrier between him and the people. He recalls how "people will say 'Hola Padrecito', how are you?' and I found that difficult and the other part of it was, we'll say, in terms of relationships, the feedback you got from people was you were very much in a role". He continues "... but, I wanted I suppose to relate to people just as Robert". Margaret, another development worker, talked about how she was perceived by the local community where she worked. They had the perception that she was some kind of expert, where:

"In my village, people would call upon me for different, they would come and ask me, I mean, you know lots of stuff I knew nothing about, very often sick children were brought to me, because it was felt that I would know what was wrong with them. So, there was an expectation there, I suppose, and people came for all sorts of advice, all kinds of things I knew nothing about."

As discussed previously the lived experience amongst the communities is a source of knowledge about development. These experiences generated a concern for the well-being

of people. They learn through their life experiences about the lack of social services and the need for the basics in life such as health and education. Martha describes how she saw the struggles of the people in the community in which she lived. Martha talked to the locals and got to know first-hand about their needs and how they managed to survive. She is an example of how the "... the practical social experience of relating to others in different situations is an important source of ethical wisdom" (Sayer, 2011, p.82). Martha recalls how she was:

"... there at village level and seeing what was going on. I was in a community in Sierra Leone trying to survive, going to the well as they did, it was better than reading about it. I was experiencing people's needs to have a clinic there without having to walk to Freetown, for example, and I knew all about it because I walked to Freetown myself. I was also experiencing the things like seeing all the 10% of the country that were wealthy from the politicians going around in Mercedes and all that. I could see that, I didn't have to, later on I learned that in countries like Sierra Leone, I formally learned that there is no middle-class. There was rich and poor but I could actually see that and we were experiencing that. And meeting people if you were down on the beach, the general sellers, I liked talking to them. I would talk away and like women were an important part of the economy and that small penny trading was important so yeah I could see all that."

Robert works in an area that has approximately 24,000 people who "would be from the poor, the poorest people in Lima", where "the big issues are to get access to the basic services such as water and very few people have stable jobs and as a result nutrition is poor and there are health problems". Margaret worked in a rural village in Africa. She recalls that life in the village was fairly basic, there was no electricity and there wasn't a lot to do.

Similar to Mark in the second missionary group Yvonne talked about the fear that the post-conflict situation created. She says you were "... just kind of living with kind of day-to-day fear". She is of the opinion that thirty-six years of war has had an impact on the culture and recalls that the city was a very violent and dangerous place to live. However, she says that "the Guatemalans are very humble people and generally very easy to be around, good fun". Yvonne's description of 'humble people' is similar to how the aid workers in Roth's 2015 study, and particularly those from the north, describe the beneficiaries of aid. They are people to be admired. Robert uses similar language when describing the people in the community he works with and states that "the people have a great spirit". The semi formal community relations and the focus on quality of life issues with little or no political discussions contributed to the practice focused development discourses.

Another aspect of the life journey in the development field is the support structures that development workers are surrounded by. As mentioned above Roth (2015) argues that self-realisation involves sharing common values, belonging to networks of solidarity and being recognised by others. The self-realisation and self-identity of these development workers is enhanced by the support networks they relied upon. Betty said that she and her partner relied upon each other for support. Martha socialised at weekends with other VSO personnel and considered this to be an important lifeline. She says that it was great to be able to share stories and experiences. These shared experiences reinforce their sense of identity as development workers. The need for self-realisation and self-identity continues when they are back in Ireland. The development workers joined Comhlámh, which provided them with a support network. They found the organisation very useful for recently returned volunteers. It was a space where they could share their experiences with likeminded people, because, as Roth (2015, p.106) observes, "... it is easier for them to share challenging and traumatic experiences with other people working in aid, rather than with friends and family. Comhlámh allowed them to reinforce their identities as development workers and provided a space where they could be recognised by others as part of their self-realisation (Roth, 2015)". For this group of development workers Comhlámh provided these workers with a network for socialising and sharing experiences as opposed to a space for sharing development ideas.

#### **5.4.4 Reflexivity, Agency and Change Within the Personal Participative Group.**

The descriptive accounts of the work practices and lives of these development workers illustrate the degree to which these respondents engage in reflexivity. They are examples of subjects who deliberate "on how some item, belief, desire, idea or state of affairs pertains or relates to itself" (Archer, 2003, p.26). The structure of Betty's work and the relationships she forged with local organisations contributed to her participative work practices. Betty reflected on how she was supporting these local organisations and said she worked more in a participative way in order to give them what they required. This resulted in her finding more specialised volunteers to work with them. Martha recalled her experiences, how they shaped her understanding of development and how she drew upon them in her studies which was better than reading about these issues in books. Robert reflects on why he left the priesthood and describes how he felt restricted, unfulfilled and lacking in an identity as a missionary. He contrasts this with how he is

now identified as Robert the person and not the priest. Yvonne worked in a post-conflict situation and this had a profound effect on her thinking. Having witnessed the traumas of the people vicariously, she talked about how she then reflected on her role as a development worker and decided that she wanted to change her career and move into human rights work.

Education throughout the development journey has been a source of learning about development. Education provides opportunities for reflexivity and agency. Robert's education and training after leaving the priesthood provided him with the skills to pursue a new career. The various courses he has undertaken have helped him reflect upon his approach to his work and these have led him on a particular path to a more professionalised way of working in the development field. Another part of Martha's education about development came when she took a formal development studies course on her return to Ireland. She recalls how she was able to draw upon the situated knowledge of her overseas life experiences during this course. Education has provided this group with technical skills which reinforce their practice focused development discourses.

#### **5.4.5 Summary**

This development worker group is best described as one containing volunteers motivated by altruism and personal goals. The majority of the respondents are a younger generation compared with the missionaries in the previous groups and went overseas in the late 1980s and 1990s, spent two years abroad based in Africa and are no longer working in the field. These workers were engaged in NGO work, education and community development and it is clear that work plays a central role in the process of learning for the respondents in this group. As development workers they share the work practices of the missionaries in the personal practice group, that being altruistic selfless work immersed in the communities and participative in nature. They had a similar range of experiences when dealing with donors. There is a degree of mobility amongst the respondents in this group as they change jobs to deepen their experiences and search for meaningful work. This search for meaning and further experience is facilitated by the reflexive processes they engage in. Reflecting on how they go about their work, the mistakes they have made, the experiences and training they may need and the subsequent changing work practices and / or jobs contribute to their knowledge about development.

For these development workers, the demands of the work and the kind of relationships that it builds with the community tend to generate an admirable cooperative approach and solidaristic everyday lives, but in their own way seem to set boundaries around the work that make broader organizational, moral or geopolitical critique seem quite distant. These boundaries are reinforced by issues relating to work / life balance issues where they overwork are generally over-committed to their work. These workers are engaged in what Roth (2017) refers to as ‘macho’ and ‘feminine’ work practices. It might appear that these development work practices are about solving ‘technical problems’, though this may be a harsh assessment of their work.

These development workers are learning through practice, through engagement with the social world of the local communities. As has been noted above, the different work experiences produce an understanding of development which highlights the importance of participation and involving the ‘subaltern’. The emphasis that these workers place on personal development and dimensions of well-being can also be traced back to their life experiences in developing countries. As documented above, the daily struggles, poverty and all its associated problems are etched in their minds. This aspect of learning typifies what Sayer (2011) calls making judgements about ends based on an awareness of well-being. An awareness and identification of the dimensions of well-being is important because these dimensions are critical components of human development and the capabilities approach and, therefore, are pertinent to their understanding of development. Alongside an awareness of the dimensions of well-being these workers through their work also form critical judgements about the specific impact on well-being from the imposition of western ideas and solutions on people and communities. These are the type of critical judgements that the post-colonial theorists call for even if they are just concerned with practice.

## **5.5 Chapter Conclusions**

The aim of this chapter was to explain where the person-centred and practice-focused discourses of development come from. The essential purpose of the chapter was to figure out how the respondents with these discourses learn about development. What aspects of the life journey in the development field contribute most in the process of learning? Additionally, what are the differences between the three different groups?

Undoubtedly, the key finding of this chapter is that the social structure of work practices is the most important site of learning about development for the development workers and missionaries. Work and occupations structure their experiences of development practice. However, the nature of work experiences varies across the three groups and it is these differences that explain the different discourses of development.

Altruism is prominent in the motivations of all three groups. Although it takes quite different forms, there is what the post-colonialists call a degree of 'othering' in these motivations. There are generational and gender differences in the motivations of the missionaries. The missionary 'personal group' is an older generation which conforms largely to a traditional 'missionary' life history. The priests see mission in religious terms whereas the sisters see mission as a calling and a desire to help. In contrast the personal practice missionary group is a younger generation who entered after Vatican II. This group emphasises the linking of personal formation and community participation and is, in many respects, an 'updating' but also a significant reformulation of the classic missionary approach. This missionary group has a broader vision of mission which includes ideas such as doing, being and sharing with people (Dorr, 2000). The development worker personal practice group are motivated by altruism, personal and professional goals.

The descriptive accounts of the working lives highlight that the work practices they are engaged in require agency, flexibility, mobility and adaptability and that their working lives are stressful, demanding and challenging (Roth, 2015). A feature of the development workers working life is the lack of a work/life balance. These workers are inclined to be over-committed and work continuously. This can be attributed to the short-term nature of their overseas placements where they wanted to get the most out of their experiences. The respondents in these three groups are engaged in work practices which Roth (2015) calls 'macho', that is getting stuck in, and taking risks while the 'feminine' work practice, which is mentoring, communication and team-building, are more visible in the respondents in the participative and practice groups. The chapter also highlighted the gendered work roles within the missionaries, where missionary sisters are identified by their occupational roles whereas priests are not and indeed sisters are denied certain roles within the institutional church. The development workers in these groups are not closely linked to an NGO career structure. There is however, a tension for development

workers in how they are viewed as experts. Both the missionaries and development workers grapple with being 'outsiders'.

There are generational differences in the work roles of the missionaries. The work practices in the missionary 'personal group' are based on a religious model of hierarchical service whether in the medical field or the church. The instrumental and institutional nature of the work, particularly in the health area, help to foster an understanding of development which focuses on the functioning aspects of health (being healthy). In contrast the work practices of the personal practice groups involve participative practices and are focused on immersive social service work embedded in the community. For the missionaries these participative work practices tie in with the newer version of mission which is about dialogue and accompanying people. The work practices in the health sector are in primary health care which took them out of the hospital or clinic and into the community. The nature of this work took them beyond health care provision to other basic, quality of life issues such as access to clean water. It is through these roles that they experienced and learnt about the importance of involving the 'subaltern' which the post-colonialists regard as essential. Another difference between these groups and the first is that they have dealings with donors and are more acutely aware of the successes and failures in development practice. These experiences contribute to their understanding of development which includes a critique of development practice. They are witnessing at first-hand something which the post-colonialists reject which is the imposition of Western ideas and solutions. Overall, the nature of the work undertaken in spite of the participative nature involves solving technical problems and has an interventionist logic.

Changing work roles, working in different locations also contributes to their understanding and knowledge of development. This is particularly true for the development workers and missionaries in the personal practice groups, whose careers have a similar mobility that is inherent in aid work (Roth, 2015). By working in different areas of practice they are deepening their practical knowledge, competencies and practical wisdom.

Life experiences in developing countries constitute another important source of learning about development. For the respondents in all three groups the daily struggles of the people to cope with poverty, to feed their families, to pay for their children to go to school and to afford basic health care informed their thinking profoundly. It is these experiences



that account for a development narrative that has the well-being of people as the ends of development, focusing on their needs, functionings and capabilities.

Another feature of the process of learning is the degree to which the development workers and missionaries in the personal and practice groups engage in, or develop, a capacity for reflexivity. This involves evaluating what they understand about their goals and the practices they are engaged in. The changing work practices, as outlined above, are examples of the type of reflexivity and agency which some missionaries and development workers pursue. They are evaluating their work practices and changing them accordingly. Reflexivity also occurs at the personal level for these workers and is represented in their search for meaning, meaningful work, self-fulfilment and self-identity. Furthermore, networks of solidarity play a role in the self-identity of these respondents. Reflexivity and changing roles brought these workers into new areas of work such as participative practices which shaped their experiences and development discourses.

The findings, as set out here, indicate that there is a strong relationship between the experiences encountered on the development journey of the development workers and missionaries and their discourses of development. The next chapter will examine the process of learning and the key experiences in the life journey in development for the respondents in the macro political groups.

## Chapter 6 Experiences of Development Macro - Political Groups

---

### 6.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to examine the process of learning that generates the four remaining, more explicitly 'political' discourses. This chapter focuses on the experiences of the development workers who hold one of the four 'macro political' discourses, including a geopolitical development discourse (exclusively development worker), a political values discourse (exclusively missionary) and development worker and missionary versions of a discourse focused on a multidimensional understanding of development which includes geopolitics and political values.

Before I examine the processes of learning which infuse each of the discourses, it is important to note that there are a number of features common to all development workers and missionaries in these groups. Work is still a major source of knowledge about development but it is not the only source. Belief systems, the context of the experiences and education appear to play more pivotal roles in the process of learning than is the case for the workers in the previous chapter. The participative and practice work experiences which are a feature of work in the personal practice group also figure in the descriptive accounts of these more 'macro' development workers. In contrast with the personal practice group the extensive careers and managerial roles of these development workers contribute to the repertoire of knowledge, including knowledge about the political aspects of development. A feature of the missionaries who adopt more macro perspectives is the particular combination of alternative definitions of mission with the local and regional context of their experiences (particularly in Latin America).

Similar to the development workers who focus on the personal practice aspects of development, the motivations of the development workers in the macro 'political' groups were a mix of altruism and personal and professional reasons. Altruism is a distinct feature of the motivations of these workers. However, some reflect on the paternalism associated with the idea of going out to help. Catherine, for example, acknowledges that a kind of paternalism is associated with the idea of going overseas to help, however, this

is a point of conflict for her. She makes this observation: "I'm going to help, you know, it can be quite an arrogant viewpoint and while you're challenged about that you still have that within you". Catherine is an example of a development worker who accepts the post-colonial rejection of 'othering'.

The personal reasons included a desire to go overseas and work in development. Cathy talks about her interest in working in Africa and says: "I think the initial thing was I also had an interest in going to Africa and I was always just interested in Africa and I would have been involved in the Anti-Apartheid movement in college". Julie recalls that she "... wanted to travel. I knew I wanted to go somewhere and work, I think. I didn't want to go backpacking or whatever. And I suppose the idea that I could go and help". Kate wanted to get to know another culture and another way of life. She was interested in "... living in a community and to be part of that community". In the combined political values and geopolitical group Aidan is an interesting case in that he is the only development worker to bring religious values alongside altruism into his motivations. He says: "I went out with a view that the best contribution is development workers going to work in developing countries". He recalls how "I was interested, I suppose, in a Christian dimension to my work". He continues: "I suppose it's the interest in justice issues and social issues, in current affairs and it's linked with religion". This is the type of connection between religion and development that authors such as Haustein (2021), Smith (2017) and Tomalin (2018, 2021) make the case for. Aidan also had an interest in the Anti-Apartheid movement in South Africa. His teaching work in Ireland further stimulated his interest in development. He says:

"I suppose I always wanted to make my teaching as interesting to the students as possible. So that meant it always had a focus on justice and, I suppose, broader issues effecting different parts of the world in current affairs and doing projects and getting speakers in who'd been to different places. So, it had that kind of general, I suppose, social dimension".

The professional motivations included a desire to work and get professional experience in development. Catherine had been working in the voluntary sector in Ireland, but wanted to go overseas and work in development. As she describes it, she "... wanted to do something different and I wanted to experience a totally different culture". Noel was looking for work and a job in an Irish NGO came up and he took it. Gerry had completed a Masters in development studies and wanted to get experience in the development sector. He says "... so I suppose that was my main motivation, was to go there to get grassroots

development experience". Having spent six months in Colombia as a student Brenda became interested in the civil war there and the work of the peace brigades and decided she wanted to work in this area. Liam said he always had an interest in development and so he started working in the sector in Ireland before going overseas.

The development workers talked about the training they received prior to going overseas. There are mixed views about the extent to which this training helped them. Fred, for example, recalls that he got "... a week of specialist training around how you go about training trainers as opposed to just being a direct educator yourself". In his opinion he wasn't prepared for his work overseas, but maintains that you can't be unless you are a development professional. He continues by stating that "... it's not necessarily a bad thing because at least you know, kind of, your common sense has to kick in". Catherine, on the other hand, says her attitudes and motivations were challenged by the training course she took prior to departure. The training course made her reflect on the role of the development worker. She believes that: "If you do little harm in your time there which is such a short period of time, that's what really struck me, if I can do little harm then I will have done okay. If I can go away and it wasn't really obvious that I was here in a strong way, in a negative way then that would be good". In a similar line of thinking to Catherine, Brendan believes that development workers need to be very clear as to why they are going overseas and should be challenged on that. According to him people need to be fully aware of what they are going to do. If this isn't clear to them then they will not be effective in their work. In contrast to Catherine, Brendan admits that he felt his own motivations weren't challenged. These observations of Catherine and Brendan illustrate what Comhlámh (the organisation for returned volunteers) sees as the need for volunteers to reflect on their motivations and their expectations (Canon & King, 2005).

The development workers in these groups, similar to those in the personal practice group, are over-committed to their work in the field and in some cases, this leads to burnout. It is something which is summarised by Brendan who was given advice by a life coach consultant who works with returning volunteers. The consultant described the range of experiences and emotions development workers go through where they are "... keen to do lots of work, and saw an enormous amount of want around you and felt that you were going to work as hard as you could to do everything you could in the time that you had there and now you come back and it's just a huge anti-climax, where you just crash right

back down to earth again". This type of burnout is similar to the experience of the aid workers in Roth's 2015 study.

Even though these groups focus on the macro political aspects of development, their discourses contain observations about development practice. Similar to those respondents with personal practice discourses, this knowledge was acquired primarily through their work in the field where all engaged in participative practices. Referring to the geopolitical and political values groups Fred and Julie quickly learned about the necessity of adopting participative practices. Both, recall how they went out with the idea that they would just deliver their respective programmes. In a way this type of approach confirms what the post-colonialists see as imposing Western ideas and solutions. Fred went out with the mindset of "... okay I'll design something and deliver it to them' as the person designing it with the people". Julie recalls how "she wasn't listening to anyone else really at the start". She says as time went on, she realized "that is not the way it's supposed to work" and then she "started listening to people more". Larry says his long-term development work involved participative practices, capacity building and finding ways to achieve best practice and sustainability. He worked with municipal governments, small local community groups, with NGOs in civil society "trying to look at ways that you could build and increase their capacity at that level". Part of his job was working in a participative way in order to place volunteers with local organisations. This is similar to Betty's work in the personal practice group. Again, these workers were learning at first-hand of the benefits and logic of listening and working with the 'subaltern'.

The development workers in the macro political groups, like those in the personal practice group, learned about the failures of development practice through their work. However, they were more likely to discuss these failings in terms of broader organisational and policy issues. Niall, for example, recalls how he had a number of dealings with Government departments which he found very frustrating because he couldn't get things done. Catherine's criticisms of the donor community come from witnessing the duplication of services by different donors. She recalls how, in her time overseas, "... a new organisation would appear, somebody who had come from Europe with lots of money to work with the street children and you would meet with them and you would say 'can you tell us, well, what's your needs analysis here? There's a bit of duplication here. Can we work together?' And you would get frustrated". Again, these work experiences

demonstrate the degree to which these workers were learning about what the post-colonialists see as the imposition of western ideas and solutions.

The development workers also shared an understanding of the importance of local workers. Brendan questions the sustainability of projects that rely on ex-pat staff. For him the “ex-pat staff changed all the time, which affected continuity, which meant a lot of re-learning with new staff”. Overall, Brendan believes the role of the ex-pat was best suited to “developing the capacity of local staff rather than delivering services themselves”. Catherine recalls how her colleagues were the skills base of the project and sometimes she felt that she was merely the taxi driver. Julie also had positive workplace relations and felt she was able to build up a very good relationship with her counterpart. Julie recalls that she didn’t really have the skills of a youth leader, but her counterpart really helped her in the job. She remembers how this colleague was:

“Encouraging young people to actually get involved with the work of the committee and I suppose it was getting the committee to involve young people but not just as like making food or whatever but, you know, bringing them along to meetings or projects and getting them actively involved in the projects, you know, I suppose so they had some kind of ownership in their own community as well”.

Catherine also questions the role and sending of short-term development workers and recalls how: “I was the fifth and this process can't continue, who is benefitting from this new face coming in each year?”. Catherine wanted her position filled by a local person but found resistance from one of the donor agencies. The examples above are further evidence of how these workers were learning and thinking about the practical implications of a model based on the imposition of Western ideas and solutions.

The development workers are also conscious of the unequal power relations in this type of work. Catherine reflected on the power that development workers have and says: "You can be given a lot of power in that role as a development worker and it can be very easily abused, very easily abused” because "... there was very little review and supervision of the person in my role that I could see". She continues by observing that "... you can get away with a lot of stuff, you know, if something goes wrong the finger is not necessarily pointed at you”. For Liam "... the relations are always extremely unequal, no matter how well or egalitarian you happen to be, you are the person with the money if you are the representative of a western organization. I was a ‘gate-keeper’ to development finance and that precludes a fully equal relationship". Liam felt that he was quite resigned to it.

The abuse of power is not limited to the ex-pat development worker, it also occurs with local counterparts as witnessed by Kate. She gives a candid assessment of her counterpart: "I don't know how to describe him! He slept with a lot of students and he would bribe students. He would threaten to fail them if they didn't sleep with him".

These development workers, in line with those in the personal group, acknowledge the fact that they are treated as an expert, something which doesn't sit well on their shoulders. Kate found being treated as an expert a challenge. She recalls that this "puts a lot of pressure on you". She says that, after she made a few mistakes, people realised that she wasn't an expert and began to relax around her. Julie was also treated as the 'expert', a title that did not sit easily with her. She describes how the community "... was expecting a professional person and I was always treated like an expert". She didn't like being viewed in this way, especially when she felt she had limited training and skills for the job. Gerry felt that in some ways he was treated as an expert, but in other ways he wasn't. Echoing Liam's comment above Gerry claims that the people would have had a different opinion of him if he had come with funding. He believes that "... people would be more receptive to your ideas because you have that kind of power of funding". These workers are thinking about the power relations inherent in development work and associated with an industry constructed around the superiority of Western knowledge.

These workers existed in a shared context of a general desire to help and, typically, high demands were placed on them to be flexible and resourceful. In addition, they shared a commitment to participatory approaches, similar to the workers who adopted more micro discourses. However, largely different from them, they also often discussed general dilemmas such as the mix of local and ex-pat workers, power relations at work and with the community, and the dilemmas of being seen as an expert. Within these shared contexts and understandings, we can now turn to the processes of learning that generated quite different development discourses among these development workers.

## **6.2 Learning about Development for 'the missionary 'Political Values' Group**

The development narratives of the respondents in the missionary group ending with politics and political values are focused on religion, politics and political values. Themes include dignity, equality, justice, rights and democracy. The process of learning for the

missionaries who share this group which is, for the most part, missionaries who are based in Latin America, consists of interaction between their religious beliefs and theological perspectives, the context of their experiences, reflexivity and work practices. It is the totality of this process that generates their understanding of development which focuses on politics and political values.

Table 6.1 below sets out the profile of the respondents in this group. The majority are priests with no other occupational specialism, who are working in Latin America. There is one Africa-based missionary who is working in education and advocacy. There are three missionary sisters who worked in health and education and have been in Africa and Latin America. This is a younger generation of missionaries compared with the personal group with a majority first went overseas in the 1960s and 1970s, post Vatican II. Most are still working overseas.

**Table 6.1 Profile of the Missionary in the Macro Political Values Group**

Pseudo Name	Region	Occupation	Age	Date first went	No of years	Still working
Martin	Latin America	Priest no specialism & Community Development	73	Late 1960s	40+	Yes
Tim	Latin America	Priest no specialism & Community Development	64	Late 1960s	35+	Yes
Chris	Latin America	Priest no specialism	62	Late 1960s	35+	No
Jim	Latin America	Priest no specialism	49	1986	21	Yes
Luke	Latin America	Priest no specialism	53	1977	30	Yes
Phil	Latin America	Priest no specialism	60	1971	35	yes
Paddy	Latin America	Priest no specialism	74	Late 1950s	50	Yes
Joe	Africa	Education	75	1955	50	Yes
Nora	Latin America	Education	74	1966	40	No
Maria	Latin America	Education	63	1973	30	No
Laura	Latin America	Health	77	1965	40	No

There is a strong connection between the religious and political discourses of the missionaries in this group. So, the question then is, how do the work and life experiences generate these concepts of development? Firstly, what motivated them to become missionaries and how does their understanding of mission influence their work and thinking?



### 6.2.1 Origins and Motivations

This group of missionaries have motivations which are very similar to those of the previous missionary groups, namely calling and vocation. They also share the broader vision of mission that the personal practice missionaries have. A distinguishing feature of this group compared with the other missionary groups is how their belief systems and understanding of mission are intertwined with the theological perspective to which they adhere. The sense of vocation and calling is illustrated by Martin who, having worked for four years, decided to become a missionary. He described how he had a calling and once he had applied, he liked the way they replied to him and the way they presented their work overseas. He was also drawn by the sense of brotherhood and hospitality in the organisation. Joe provides an African perspective, saying he was motivated to become a Jesuit from a very young age. He recalls: "We had uncle's priests and it seemed to be a way of life that gave satisfaction". The missionary sisters in this group had a similar set of motivations to the sisters in the other groups. The decision by Nora to become a nun was, in part, influenced by the visits by various nuns to their schools telling them about the religious life and the wonderful privilege of a religious vocation. After leaving school she started to think about whether she had a vocation and began to read about the different organisations and then decided to join up.

The missionaries in this group, in contrast to the personal missionary cohort, embrace the broader definition of mission as being and sharing. Included in their definitions are themes such as dignity, justice and rights and they are concerned with human well-being and human development. As an illustration, Jim believes "... you're not going out to convert, you're going out to be with people and to help them in their daily journey and in their daily struggles". Another example is Laura who states that mission "... is to be with the people and is no longer about providing a service in the sense of medicine". There is a commitment by these missionaries to social justice which places a high emphasis on "... improving the living conditions of the communities within which they work as part of their concern with propagating the word of God" (Deneulin and Bano, 2009, p.15). This approach to mission highlights what Bradbury (2013) sees as a commitment to evangelism which has a concern for the well-being of others, which embraces both its spiritual and social aspects (Bosch, 1991). This is captured by Nora who talked about the important link "between spirituality and social concern".

For these missionaries Liberation Theology underpins their understanding of mission. They used this theological frame as a source of knowledge in their work so that they could interpret the local, social and political contexts and relate these to the gospels. Martin recalls how Liberation Theology "helped us develop our pastoral practice". Chris says that it "... got us working at that level, looking at the world in the light of the gospel and what's the gospel saying about this situation". In this theological frame, according to Tim, "... the whole reality of human history and what was happening in the real-life situation became an incredibly important component of the faith experience". Laura was particularly drawn to Gustavo Gutierrez's view that reflection comes from down below and you work up from where the people are at. She says this perspective gave her "... a greater respect for the people and for the poor and for their ideas". The testimony of Eamon in the personal missionary group illustrated that Liberation Theology, and the 'new version of Mission' (Dorr, 2000), were not universally accepted amongst the missionaries in Latin America. These competing visions and work practices created tensions and divisions. Martin talked about these tensions and gave an insight into the thinking of those who followed the traditional route. These missionaries "were protective of the status quo out of their loyalty to the church". They were, as Dorr (2012) points out, slow and reluctant to disengage from an older spirituality. These people were concerned that the social issues were subverting the main purpose of the church - conversion and maintenance- and that these times would pass. This was certainly reflected in Eamon's views in the personal group. The most important thing for this older group according to Martin "was to hold on to the truths of the church" and "therefore they would not have appreciated our efforts".

Liberation theology is central to what the missionaries call 'spreading the good news' and involves "... liberation from everything that oppresses people and economic and political oppression are amongst the obvious of such things. So, liberation from these forms of oppression is at the core of the good news of Jesus" (Dorr, 2012, p.225). This is reflected in Martin's definition of mission which is "... preaching and living the gospel messages as presented in Luke IV 18, the good news to the poor and often finding that when you sit down to reflect with people that to remember that God is there before you and God is working in the people and therefore it is just a case of tuning in to the cries of the people to see where they are at". Martin sets out the clear connection between religion and human development. For him, mission is "a challenging experience and it is a community exercise for me and it is one that involves human development and not just development

of a church structure. It involves the development of the Christian community but at the service of the people". For Chris, mission is about bringing the Gospel to the people and the reality of their lives. He says: "It's one questioning the other or one questioning itself in the light of the other". Tim's definition elaborates on these themes and includes political and religious values which include rights and human dignity. For him mission means:

"To proclaim a message that directly has to do with people's dignity. That the love of God is available to all people and that love means something that is incarnate, is part of the life of any particular situation and has to be expressed in basic rights. Dignity expressed in people not being hungry, people being fed, people having a right to education to develop their minds, to be critical. Mission also has to do with decent housing. It has to do with accessibility to all the great values of modernity. And it also has to do with the building of a society based not just on modern values that have to do with individuality but bringing native values like solidarity into the political arena. Mission has to do with development. Mission has to do with an enjoyment of the human experience and that this is directly related to something that is God given".

Further examples of the idea of being with people and the focus on the dignity and self-esteem of people are given by Joe and Maria. Joe works in Africa and defines mission as "... helping people to bring out the good that is in them and education of course. To bring out the goodness in them and to relate it to the message we have in the gospels". For Maria, mission means "allowing that liberating presence of Jesus to be active, you know, within me and within the community and that people might grow and that people might know their value".

### **6.2.2 Situated Learning and Work Experiences**

What sets the work practices of this group of missionaries apart from the previous missionary groups is the extent to which they are engaged in what Roth (2015) calls reflexive interaction with the wider social environment. The institutional frames such as liberation theology and their definitions of mission are the foundations of their work as missionaries. Their work embraces the social and spiritual aspects of mission and they are engaged in practices which Deneulin (2013, p.55) calls "... revealing the face of God in economic, social and political structures". The beliefs, work and life experiences of the missionaries in Latin America are intertwined. This interplay is reflected in how the missionaries are reflecting the lives of the people through the gospels. This is described by Martin who says the missionaries were:

"Preaching the good news not just from the point of view of informing people of the sacraments of the church structures or getting them involved in the church but also

using Luke IV which is a prime text for saying we have to be good news to the poor and if we are not good news to them, then we are not preaching the gospel so therefore that has a social content to it as well which we took seriously".

In a similar way Tim believes that "... it certainly is my job as a Christian and as a priest to express the voice of what the Christian message is all about, to denounce a situation that's contrary to what Jesus is all about and what Jesus proclaims". This stands in contrast to the hierarchical sacramental model practiced by the missionaries in the personal group. Chris rails against the power the church has and sees the role of the missionary as being "here to serve one another. We're not here to lord it over one another". He continues:

"It's what we're supposed to be about, shedding any kind of power and authority over people, telling them they're in sin or they can't go to communion because they're cohabiting. That's power. That's not service and we're not here for that. We're here with them and to find some way to relate the gospel to their lives and find some way to see the gospel in the light of their lives. That's service in that sense".

The process by which these missionaries embraced liberation theology and figured out how to read the gospel from the standpoint of the poor wasn't easy. Their training didn't equip them for these tasks, so their early years were an apprenticeship where they became missionaries. Martin, for example, talked about how they immersed themselves in their work and learned from the life experiences. He says that "... we were in general trying to equip ourselves to see and read the gospel as and from the standpoint of the people who were basically poor migrants from the mountain areas of Peru". This apprenticeship process wasn't easy and raised issues of identity and a questioning of their roles and this is exemplified by Tim who recalls how he was deeply affected by having to baptize a small child who was dying due to malnutrition and hunger. The parents weren't able to get work, they weren't able to feed their family. This event made him ask himself whether he should continue on the traditional route of just administering the sacraments, where he "would probably get arthritis in my wrist with all the sick kids that you would have to baptize", or look for new ways of being a missionary. He recalls how he felt that things were seriously out of kilter and says he "... became more and more filled, not just with theological questions but with real rage that you were in a situation where you were witnessing at every hand's turn impossible situations where parents saw their children dying in front of their eyes". He continues that that was "a very, very serious and uncomfortable development or discovery for a young priest to make. Tim recalls the types of questions they asked themselves:

“What does it mean to celebrate Christmas? What does it mean to celebrate again the birth of Jesus of Nazareth in this sort of situation? So, we began to prepare a different type of message and a different sense of Christmas, more to do with denunciation of the sort of society that we’re living in and the demand for radical change”.

The social aspects of mission and the pursuit of social justice are reflected in parish work linked to the peoples' struggle for a better life. Martin describes how missionaries worked with local organisations who:

"Would have been developing their demands to do with electricity, a light supply for the people at the right price. Water supply where they had water and trying to get the government to put in part of the funding for that, the building of schools, some medical facilities and medical posts. So, accompanying the people as they demanded".

Advocacy and solidarity are the hallmarks of this work and Martin recalls that they would go "with the population to march to try to put pressure on the government for improvements, we would walk with them to show our solidarity". Jim talks about how social justice is the cornerstone of their work and that involves informing people of their rights, "... making people conscious of what is theirs, what they have a right to". Tim sees the role of the missionary as questioning the state and says "... what I would see now as the basic question would be the absolute imperative of the state, in this case the Peruvian state, having a new relationship with its own people, having a completely different appreciation, relationship, treatment, of its own people". He says that their work has to be an "... effort to create new human relations that are based on solidarity, that are based on real life issues". These acts of social solidarity, and the pursuit of social justice, demonstrate how important religious and political values such as equality, justice and rights are at the heart of their work practices.

Advocacy and social solidarity are also mixed with social care provision and community development. Martin, for example, set up two fully functioning NGOs in the barrios he is working in. The projects are in women's health and income generation, through skills' training. One such project is a 'Pastoral de Salud' and he notes that there was a "... move into preventative medicine, in other words education to help the health of the people and also campaigns such as HIV and AIDS to educate people, trying to prevent the development of basic diseases". They also had another group which is a "... citizenship for human rights to help the people tackle their social problems”.

Another example of the interplay between religious and political values in the work of the missionaries is Nora's work in education in Brazil. She talks about how she became interested in development and education and the idea of the basic Christian community. She moved from working in formal education in Nigeria to the informal sector in Brazil. Social justice lies at the heart of Nora's work in informal education and literacy in the community. One of the teaching methods she used was teaching people about the political situation and asking questions about why they were suffering? She says people learn to read and write from life experiences. Her teaching methodology was influenced by Paulo Friere. She recalls that the Church in Brazil was working with people to help them attain their rights and their dignity. While there she was in a church which was linking the gospels to the real-life struggles of the people.

Joe is the exception in this group as he is the only missionary based in Africa. His work in education is informed by his sense of mission and the underlying religious and political values such as justice and dignity. He has garnered a considerable reputation in Africa in the field of education. He worked as an advisor to the education ministry in Zambia. One example is a foundational course Joe ran for 1<sup>st</sup> year university students which focused on:

“The interaction between education and development, what development meant in very general things. I am not a specialist, but some of the basic concepts that were involved in development and some of the major issues, like universal education and universal access to health services, girls' education, literacy education, these aspects”.

Another example is his work post-retirement in the area of HIV and AIDS which involves “... public advocacy, trying to raise awareness of the problems of AIDS and education”. What has become clear to Joe is that: “There is going to be no development, going to be no education if this disease continues as it is”. He states that “... if you don't address AIDS and education, AIDS can actually destroy your education system, because AIDS is killing your teachers and it is stopping children going to school”. Joe brings issues of poverty and gender equality to the forefront of the debates on HIV and AIDS. His belief is that you would not have the AIDS problem if you didn't have the poverty. It is the poverty that is fuelling it. This is the message Joe recently gave to the Swedish Minister of Overseas Development, when he said to her:

“Get out there and build more roads, sink more wells and build more schools. Get more clinics. Then you are fighting AIDS. It is no good distributing condoms. Distributing condoms, you are just beating down the flames of a fire, you are not getting down below. The roots down below are poverty, poverty, poverty and

underdevelopment and if you are not dealing with that you are not dealing with this disease and that is my gripe”.

Joe is an example of how underlying values, beliefs and work experiences contribute to his religious and broad political development narrative.

Overall, in contrast with the personal missionary group, this group has a wider focus other than administering sacraments and embraces the social and spiritual aspects of mission (Bosch, 1991). They have fully embraced the idea of mission as witness, being with people, listening and sharing with them (Dorr, 2000). Their identity is also rooted in their theological perspectives, such as Liberation Theology, which are a source of meaningfulness for them. These theological frames have structured their work practices. Their work involves ‘reading the signs of the times’ and reflecting the real lives of the people in the Gospel. The work of these missionaries involves the type of critical analysis that the post-colonialists call for. In spreading the good news, they are linking the Gospel teachings to the reality of the people’s struggles and questioning structures of social and political inequality and injustice. The work of these missionaries highlights the interaction between religion and development as outlined by Haustein, Smith and Tomalin. The work practices outlined above is evidence of how missionaries “because of the primacy of beliefs in their practice, have long reflected on issues of cultural sensitivity and how individual and social transformation are embodied” (Smith, 2017, p.28). At the heart of ‘reading the signs of the times’ according to liberation theologians is social analysis. So, what are the real-life experiences they encounter and which form the basis of this social analysis?

### **6.2.3 Local Communities and Social Relations**

The worlds they inhabit have a significant bearing on their thinking and work practices. Firstly, a common theme for the missionaries was the poverty they witnessed. They give extensive testimony about the negative impact that poverty has on people and communities. Comparing her experiences in Brazil with Nigeria Nora recalls: "I didn't see poverty in Nigeria like I saw there in Brazil, it was much worse". A driver of poverty in Peru, according to Martin and Chris, is the lack of work. Martin describes the difficulties that families face in these precarious work situations in Peru, "... life is not easy! The big difficulty is that there is not enough work for everyone". Martin believes

this situation causes "frustration at that level and most are not paid adequately". Chris also talks about the lack of workers' rights. He says "... there are no trade unions so there are no supports to get a job". He also deplors the quality of work that's on offer, with short-term contracts where people are expected to work twelve hours a day, six days a week for eight hours pay. According to Martin the precarious work situation in Peru has resulted in:

"The extended family economy" operating in Peru "where everyone pulls together but there's a lot of stress and strain. They smile but behind it there can be a lot of pain and a lot of suffering. The macro-economy is going well but the micro-economy is not. The trickle-down effect has not worked for the majority of the people due to poverty which means they don't eat. They have basic needs and 30% of that is extreme poverty which means there are basic serious problems in their healthcare, in their home situations. It makes life very difficult for them".

The missionaries based in Latin America learned about politics and political values from their life experiences in Latin America. They spoke about how oppressed the people were and how they have been denied their rights for centuries. In Peru, for example, they observed the growing inequalities in the country and a political history where the democratic spaces of Peru are seen as favouring the elite and marginalizing the poor. They have also commented on how this has affected the people's psyche. Chris draws attention to the fact that, from his experience, the people were downtrodden and this is passed from generation to generation and, in his opinion:

"It doesn't come from one person being ill-treated. It comes from successive generations. So, the little kid growing up watching his grandfather and seeing his grandfather regard himself as nothing and then watching his spud-digging own father in the same line, so that he doesn't learn to believe in himself. All he learns to believe in is what he sees around him, people being virtually treated as slaves. In fact, when I first came here my reaction out there on the farms, on the cotton farms, was 'My God this is like out of Tolstoy'".

Chris goes on to say "... so if you're brought up in that you don't learn to believe in anything else, that you're nothing". Tim describes the Peruvian state as follows:

"Historically and up to this day unfortunately is experienced as the enemy of people and it's a state that's aggressive and all the time not available or angry or abusive towards the basic rights and minimal demands of people. So, the people on their part have not as yet discovered deep down or appropriated any real sense of their own identity as citizens. The people struggle for life and struggle for a living and struggle for housing and stuff like that. But they do it as outsiders. They're knocking at the door of something that doesn't belong to them. So, in that sense they're discovering that the state is narrow and not present to them and definitely not friendly".



The reality of life in Latin America was poverty, oppression, inequality, injustice, and a lack of rights. The state and the political system are not working for the interests of the poor people. The missionaries are living in these communities who are struggling and it is against this backdrop and coupled with their underlying values and theological perspectives that their religious and political views of development are formulated. These missionaries have followed the 1971 apostolic exhortation “to hear the cry of the poor and to see the links between that cry and social injustice” Dorr (2012, p.141). It is the interactions with the people and the witness of these daily struggles, as outlined above, that shape their discourses of development.

#### **6.2.4 Reflexivity, Agency and Change**

Reflexivity agency and change are features of the life journeys of the respondents in this group. The missionaries have been influenced by organisational / institutional ideologies such as Liberation Theology and the Latin American and Central America bishops conference (CELAM). Central to this reflexive process was figuring out what their role as missionaries was. In their formative – apprenticeship years there was a strong sense of coming together to reflect on Liberation Theology and to figure out how to incorporate that theology into their thinking and practice as priests. Martin talked about how they reflected on what they were doing and had to learn how to fit in as missionaries and how to read the signs of the times.

Organisational and institutional frames of reference such as society chapters or bishops’ conferences have had an influence on how they practiced their mission. Tim maintains that the Latin American bishops "were more and more aware that the social question was the issue that they were facing in their church". According to Tim "... the famous meeting that was held in Medellín in Columbia in 1968 and that particular meeting became the sort of founding moment of the revelation and the renewal of the church in Latin America". Furthermore, Martin recalls how the bishops:

"Began to analyse what was happening to the ordinary Catholics and they began to realize that there were great levels of poverty and that they did not just happen, it happened for reasons and there were structures of injustice that existed and it was part of the role of the Christian to address that and to look towards fair distribution of wealth and more opportunities for the ordinary people."

Dorr (2012, p.141) argues that, in 1971, there was an apostolic exhortation where “religious communities were exhorted to hear the cry of the poor and to see the links

between that cry and social injustice". This is reflected by Joe who recalls how the deliberations of his missionary society had an influence on his thinking and work practices. One of the most significant documents for the Jesuits, in his view, was their 1972 document whose focus was on the preferential option for the poor and placed an emphasis on social justice.

Another example is Nora who reflected on her work in Africa and also the type of institutional Church she belonged to. These reflections led her to conclude that there was little change in the Catholic Church and she found this a bit of a struggle, whilst at the same time they were hearing about what was going on in Latin America. These reflections prompted her to move to Brazil where she found a Church rooted in the community which gave her a new sense of meaning and identity.

These missionaries continue to reflect on, and try to make sense of, the type of society they are living in. This is illustrated by Tim who says he is constantly reflecting and says that, as missionaries, they are:

“Obligated to look at things from the eyes of the present and the possibilities of the present and that’s how we understand our situation now, working with the people who are still in search of and struggling for basic rights and a human life that has to do with dignity and the possibilities of living like human beings”.

This is a further example of how the "environment reflexively plays such an important part in both what and whom the person is" (Archer, 2000, p.297). This political reflection linked to their beliefs is an example of the type of reflection that Smith (2017) who has a positive disposition towards religious believes missionaries possess.

### **6.3 Learning about Development and the Missionary ‘Macro Geopolitical and Political Values’ Group**

This missionary group has a multi-dimensional narrative which includes geo-politics and political values. The profile of the missionaries is similar to the political values group and again they are located in Latin America, embedded in the community and living in highly politicised societies where inequalities and injustice prevail. For the most part the process of learning for this group is the same as the political values group. They have similar work and life experiences and have a broader idea of mission rooted in Liberation Theology. However, particular work roles and education play a significant role in shaping

their development discourses particularly in relation to their geopolitical ideas. Table 6.2 below sets out the profile of the respondents in this group. The majority of them are missionary priests who have no occupational specialism. All the missionaries are still working in the field. There is one religious sister whose area of expertise is health.

**Table 6.2 Profile of the Missionaries in the Geopolitical & Political Values Group**

<b>Pseudo Name</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Date first went</b>	<b>No of years</b>	<b>Still working</b>
Eithne	Latin America	Health	63	1974	30	Yes
James	Latin America	Priest no specialism	53	1979	28	Yes
Eric	Latin America	Priest no specialism	62	1973	30	Yes
Rory	Latin America	Priest no specialism	66	1966	40	Yes
Richard	Latin America	Community development	52	1995	12	Yes

### 6.3.1 Origins and Motivations

The missionaries in this group had the same set of values and belief systems based on the ideas of Liberation Theology as the political values group. These beliefs and values underpinned and structured their work as missionaries and their understanding of development. Again, the focus of these missionaries is on social justice and on "improving the living conditions of the communities within which they work as part of their concern with propagating the word of God" (Deneulin and Bano, 2009, p.15). Their motivations are more explicitly political when compared with the political values group. This is exemplified by Rory who sees a "people having a chance to live a human life with some respect and with some dignity as distinct from the rich becoming richer at the expense of the poor becoming poorer". Social justice is also concerned with "equality, justice, human relationships, one with the other, respect, dignity, justice, a fair crack of the whip". James believes the "mission of the church is proclaiming God's kingdom, the Gospel and the Gospel having relevance for people in their lives and how people are living or the circumstances within which they're living". Eithne, who is the only religious sister in this group, had similar motivations to the sisters in the first and second missionary groups. She talked about the importance of prayer and linking the gospels to their work.

Prayer meant “a reflection of the gospels, in the way they were living the gospel and it was very much alive through the work for us as well. It was really enriching”.

### 6.3.2 Situated Learning and Work Experiences

The work of these missionaries is similar to that of the missionaries in the political values group. Their work is underpinned and structured around ideas founded in Liberation Theology. These practices included a move away from a purely sacramental model, and, by way of example, Eric observes that, if his role was “like a permanent annual cycle of ceremonies and feast days”, it would be boring for him. These missionaries went through the same process of figuring out their roles and identities as missionaries. Rory recalls that the first five years were essentially a learning experience, “... trying to learn the language, trying to understand culture and what makes people tick and what is important to them”. Eric has learnt “... over the years through the help of Peruvian laity, nuns, priests that being a priest is not a static job. James describes how he has become “... a little bit more informal and able to be probably more in a Peruvian style than I was in the past so less emphasis on the ritual but more focused on a community celebration that is participative”.

The work of these missionaries like their counterparts in the political values group demonstrates the interaction between religion and development as outlined by Haustein (2021), Smith (2017) and Tomalin (2018, 2021). The religious and political values of justice and rights figure prominently in the work practices of these missionaries. To highlight this, Eric believes the challenge for him “is to push ahead and search for meaning in life and do what we can to provide a bit more justice and harmony between people”. For Rory his work as a priest involves “... building up the Christian community, in proclaiming the message of Jesus”. His work is to be of service, being a presence and accompanying people in their daily struggles. James shares this view and says he came to distinguish between the role of being of service and a presence rather than providing a service as doing and giving. Their work is in the spirit of the new version of mission that Dorr (2000) refers to, that of being and sharing. These religious and political values are also evident in a pastoral education programme run by Rory. The programme includes working with women who experience violence or those who show solidarity with people who suffer from violence. Another aspect is “... education on Catholic Social Teaching

and Latin America bishops, documents, and their relevance for people today”. They also have courses on citizenship, democracy, rights, voting.

Social care provision is part and parcel of the work of these missionaries. Richard, for example, set up a centre for young people and a foster house for abused children. His vision for the centre he built “was to have a place for children where they could be free to be children”. The children's centre functions as a drop-in centre, providing after school services. The only missionary sister in this group, Eithne, like the medical personnel in the previous groups, saw her work moved out into the community where she worked in primary healthcare. She moved from Africa to Latin America in 1998, where her work is more community-focused. Eithne describes the difference between working in Africa and Latin America as follows:

“I was more aware in Latin America maybe because the people had this culture of being in groups. In Africa, it was very difficult, like we would have health outreach but there was no connection, there was no committee, it wasn't, we weren't empowering the people to the same extent, we were sort of caring in a way but not leading them, there was no building up of the group there or seeing their whole situation, which we were able to do in Honduras”.

These missionaries have taken courses which have contributed to this broad macro political thinking. Rory recalls how a course in sociology taught him about “social analysis and the socio-economic history of Peru, socio-economic history of Latin America”. He keeps up to date with international affairs and mentions how useful the United Nations Human Development reports are, remarking: “you get a very, very good summary of what life is in Peru by well informed, neutral observers”. This is an example of the political analysis he brings to his missionary work.

### **6.3.3 Local Communities and Social Relations**

Again, the social analysis inherent in liberation theology is embraced by these missionaries and informed by their lived experiences in the community. This missionary group have social and community relations similar to those of the political values group. Again, the context of the experiences is an important element in the process of learning. They are located in Latin America, embedded in the community and living in highly politicised societies where inequalities and injustice prevail.

The issues affecting the people in Latin America informed their knowledge of politics and political values. Rory talks about the lack of faith that people have in the political system in Latin America and is of the view that:

“People do not value democracy or a democratic system and they don’t value it and they don’t realise it as something as good not because they’re not intelligent but because simply it hasn’t worked for them. It hasn’t put food on the table so people reject democracy because for them it’s a vote every six years and they haven’t been able to put in place their own organisations that feel that they can represent them and until this happens they will not have this sense of equal work or equal value with the overall system that operates in the country and like you’ve put the finger on the real issue, you know, that it’s not just a question of somebody telling them about their equal value or values like equality and values of equal rights and stuff like that. That’s theory. They’re just generalisations and abstractions until they in some way put in place a real experience of transformation in their own lives”.

The missionaries in this group learned about poverty and the impact on the well-being of the people. James, for example, speaks of his frustration with poverty “because, I suppose, because of the overwhelming situation of poverty and extreme poverty”. Rory recalls his early days of being in a vast parish and asking: “What do you do? You see all these things around you. You see poverty, very poor housing, no water, no lights, no sewerage, very poor buses, very insipient schools. For me it was different to see it really, than to have read it in magazines or heard it in talks”. He continues: “The majority of the people get very low wages and very poor jobs and have all the consequences of that”. Eithne describes how the only cash income in Honduras came from coffee. The workers tended to be children and “... got two dollars a day for working from five AM until two thirty pm”. She realised that: “... you couldn’t stop them from going because that was the only income the parents had to buy shoes and school things for them and clothes and they were just subsisting on that”. Looking back on her time in Honduras Eithne commented on how oppressed the people were especially the women. These experiences demonstrate that these missionaries have what Misesan Cara (2018) call a prophetic vision which is a concern for a better life for all.

#### **6.3.4 Reflexivity, Agency and Change**

Reflexivity is an important element in the process of learning for these missionaries. Central to this reflexive process was figuring out what their roles as missionaries were. Here they reflected on whether the knowledge and resources their training provided them with were adequate for their work as missionaries. They found that their training and traditional model of church did not provide them with all the necessary skills with which

to negotiate and interpret the mission world they inhabited. Eric recalls how this entailed throwing away much of what he learned in the seminary. However, these missionaries were able to draw on new forms of knowledge and resources such as Liberation Theology which provided them with new ways of being missionaries so that they could interpret the local social and political contexts and relate these to the gospels. These tools gave them the resources to engage in what Roth (2015) calls reflexive interaction with the wider social environment. Liberation Theology provided these missionaries with a way of interpreting the political structures and how they affected the people through the gospels. They are engaged in practices which Deneulin (2013, p.55) calls "revealing the face of God in economic, social and political structures". There is a stronger sense of political reflection and interpretation amongst this group of missionaries. This contrasts with the limited reflexivity amongst the personal group of missionaries. This political reflection linked to their beliefs is an example of the type of reflection that Smith (2017) believes missionaries possess.

### 6.3.5 Summary

The process of learning for the missionaries is similar to that of the missionaries in the political values group and they share their beliefs and have political values linked to their religious beliefs which are rooted in Liberation Theology. Their 'free floating' religious role creates challenges for them but also offers opportunities to engage in community development and political activities. Part of these activities is running community or adult education programmes. These programmes bring together religious and political interpretations. For this group, as for all Latin America-based missionaries, this is strongly mediated through Liberation Theology. The geopolitical aspect of their discourse stems from the various education courses they have undertaken which introduced them to broader political and development issues and provided them with tools such as social analysis which they have used in their work. Particular work roles and education play a significant role in shaping their development discourses. The social analysis of the economic, social and political structures interlinked with their belief systems illustrate the interconnection between religion and development. The interconnection between beliefs and practice as outlined above highlight the type of critical awareness that post-colonial theorists see as essential in development.

## 6.4 Learning about Development for the Development Worker Geopolitical Group

This group arrives at a geopolitical discourse, interlinked with a critique of practice. In comparison with the personal practice discourse these development workers also focus on the obstacles posed by macro features such as free trade and aid policies and problems with the practices of development organisations. The discourses include a variety of the critical themes mentioned by the post-colonialists.

### 6.4.1 Origins and Motivations

Table 6.3 below sets out the profile of the respondents within the geopolitical discourse group. There is one development worker who worked in Latin America and the remainder are Africa-based. The development workers in this group worked in a variety of occupations, such as: community development, education, health and NGOs and the majority were in the field in the 1990s and 2000s. Half are still working in development or development-related fields and make up the more professionalised cohort of people I interviewed, while the rest are no longer working in development. Typically, the stints overseas ranged from two to four years. However, one development worker had spent a considerable time overseas. As outlined earlier in the chapter the motivations of this group of development workers were a mix of altruism, personal and professional reasons.

**Table 6.3 Profile of the Macro- Geopolitical Group**

Pseudo Name	Region	Occupation	Age	Date first went	No of years	Still working
<b>Brian</b>	Africa	Health	48	1994	4	<b>No</b>
<b>Cathy</b>	Africa	Health	37	1996	2	<b>No</b>
<b>Conor</b>	Africa	Health / NGO work	--	1999	4	<b>No</b>
<b>Niall</b>	Africa	Health	57	1993	5	<b>No</b>
<b>Brendan</b>	Africa	Health / NGO work	37	2001	2	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Frances</b>	Africa	Education	32	2002	2	<b>No</b>
<b>Kate</b>	Africa	Education	38	2002	4	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Marie</b>	Africa	NGO staff / dev Professional	44	1985	22	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Noel</b>	Africa	NGO Staff	28	2002	2	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Catherine</b>	Africa	Community development	34	2004	2	<b>No</b>
<b>Ronan</b>	Latin America	Community development	30	2002	2	<b>Yes</b>



#### 6.4.2 Situated Learning and Work Experiences

The main difference between this group and the personal practice group is that these workers have worked in a variety of areas of practice and have created careers for themselves in the development industry. Throughout their careers these workers have gained broader development experiences compared with the previous group. In most cases these careers have evolved from an initial stint as a volunteer. Another feature is the managerial roles undertaken by this group. These careers in managerial roles and service provision have broadened their experiences and knowledge of development practice. These practitioners are learning through practice and the totality of their career or life history in the field.

These career paths, with their diverse sets of experiences, have contributed to their search for meaningful work, self-fulfilment and self-identity (Roth, 2015). The careers also highlight the mobility that is inherent to aid work (Roth, 2015). One clear example is Marie who has had a long and varied career in the NGO sector. Her postings ranged from field officer to regional director and she has built up considerable experience in the development field. Marie has had a number of placements and worked in different countries in Africa, where she has built up considerable knowledge from her managerial roles. She is now working in the development field back in Ireland. Kate spent three years in teacher training and then spent a further ten months working in the Ministry of Education in Nigeria. She was involved in setting up a programme which was a partnership between the local schools, the teacher training college and the local education authority to try "and make the training more practical". After the teacher training college Kate moved into the National Commission College of Education (NCCE) in Nigeria. Here she was working with them on the curriculum for teacher training colleges. Kate continues to work in a development-related role back home. These workers acquired knowledge about the broader policy aspects of development through their work in formulating and implementing policies and practices.

Brendan took a sabbatical from his medical career in Ireland to work as a volunteer with Goal in Sudan. His role was a medical field officer in a primary health care programme. Following his stint as a volunteer he decided he wanted to give up medicine and pursue a career in development. Brendan spoke about his decision to switch careers, describing how he "worked in a hospital for a year after I came back where you suddenly had no

power and you're bottom of the pile again, you know you're just sort of slotted into the big machine again and yeah and you're tired and you hadn't rested properly and you haven't taken your breaks properly and you're physically under par". The burnout he experienced is similar to the aid workers in Roth's 2015 study. He now has a job with an international development organization and his role is to set up the Irish branch.

Conor is another example of the more professionalised aid worker who had managerial responsibilities. He has had a varied career spending four and a half years working in five different missions. His first overseas trip was for two years working in Sudan as a project coordinator for GOAL. He then took a year out and did a Masters' degree in development studies in the School of Oriental and International Studies in London. He returned to Africa in 2002 working as a head of mission for GOAL in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He then did two short-term, ten-week placements working as a frontline doctor with MSF in the Congo and Darfur respectively. This was followed up by a five-month assignment with MSF as a frontline doctor in the Central African Republic. Similar to Mark in the personal practice missionary group, and Yvonne in the personal practice group Conor has worked in conflict and post-conflict situations. Conor worked and lived close to the frontline in the civil war and they were under threat of being attacked by rebels. They had to learn how to deal with the local officials in the area. These officials had the power to shut down their project and it had to be handled sensitively. Conor's posting was initially for one year. He came home for a break and decided to go back. He says: "I asked if I could be sent back there because I realized all the mistakes, I had made during the first year. I also realized that I knew how to solve all of the mistakes and I really wanted to go back and get it right the second time round". This is an example of his commitment to his work and the monitoring and evaluation that people undertake of the things they are devoted to (Archer, 2000). Their managerial roles and working in conflict broadened their knowledge of development practice and the sensitivities of working with different groups which deepened their understanding of the multidimensional aspects of development.

A feature of these more professionalised careers is the managerial role all of these development workers have. Again, working in different areas of practice generates a more professionalised knowledge about development. These managerial roles required institutional and sectoral knowledge and involved participative practices, working with a multiplicity of different actors. One example of the types of managerial roles involved is

Marie's work as the director of an Irish organisations programme in Africa. The goal of their programme was "... strengthening civil society and strengthening the engagement of civil society in government and government with civil society". In order to achieve this Marie worked with individual NGOs and NGO networks. Her job, in her own words, was "... to plan the programme and design it and to see what our strategy would be, who we would partner with and then there was a certain amount of programme management as well so once we identified the partners and negotiating with them and so on". Marie gives a description of what was involved in the programme which was:

"Supporting development through skill-sharing and through recruitment, well it started off at the beginning where we were recruiting development workers from Ireland who would work in partnership in local organisations. So then, as we were moving along, we started doing salary support for local organisations to recruit locally and also, we built up a kind of a capacity fund. It became a kind of package of different things that could be a development worker short-term or long-term or somebody specialist coming in to help us setting up a system".

Marie also gave an example of the types of tasks involved when conducting an organisational assessment of a new partner. They had to think about what combination of tools they have available, what interventions could they bring and then negotiate with the local partner. She notes that "... sometimes we worked towards, maybe, a bigger funding application to Irish Aid for the NGO or commit smaller funds that we had at our own disposal or recruiting somebody from Ireland". The managerial roles and dealing with donors are also a feature of the community development work. Catherine worked on a project with street children in Zambia, where she had a managerial role. This evolved into strategic development looking at where it was going, restructuring management structures and financial reporting. Part of her remit was to look at staff training and formulating policies and procedures for dealing with young people. In his role as a project co-ordinator Conor was principally managing a primary health care project. Even though his role was that of a project co-ordinator rather than medical he says he "used his medical background to make management decisions".

Careers and their trajectory play an important part in shaping the discourses of development which the members of this group engage in. These careers have given them a range of development experiences and knowledge which include the formulation and implementation of policies and practices. Through their work and careers and links with donors they have gained knowledge of the functioning of the international aid system. At

a practical level they learn about the sensitivities of working with different actors in the development field.

The work practices outlined above tell a story of development practice which is interventionist, imposing Western ideas and solutions. The work histories also tell a story of development workers who are trying to work and make sense of the contradictions of delivering aid whilst at the same time embracing participative practices and involving the 'subaltern'. Like the personal practice group these development workers talk about the failures associated with imposing solutions on people and communities. The managerial roles also highlight the power that is attached to such roles.

#### **6.4.3 Local Communities and Social Relations**

The world outside the work setting also have a bearing on the development workers' understanding of development. Roth (2015) talked about the stressful and challenging nature of aid work, where these workers are exposed to poverty and traumas. This is the case for a number of the respondents in this group. Like Mark in the missionary personal practice group, and Yvonne in the personal practice group, war and post- conflict situations served as the backdrop to Brendan's and Conor's experiences. They had experiences similar to these workers and Conor gives a vivid description of his working and living conditions in Sudan. He recalls that the personal challenges in that particular first mission "... were living in the most primitive circumstances that I ever lived in and I will ever live in. There are people who say there is nowhere tougher than South Sudan and I believe it. I have never seen tougher conditions before or since". He continues: "... added to that the security threats, we were put under house arrest and affectively almost kidnapped at one point. We were bombed by the government of Sudan, having to treat patients with the barest medical facilities possible". Brendan worked in a very poor area in Sudan where the people had little access to clean water and there were significant levels of malnutrition. The people "seemed very happy because I felt they had a day-to-day approach to life". Sudan is a dangerous place according to him and so "the practicalities of security did limit your involvement with the local community" because "the military were a constant presence in the community". Catherine described how tough life was for people in Zambia. She recalls how the women especially were a very joyous people and persevered, possessing a real strength and life. On the other hand, she talks about the

conditions they live in, stating: " Life was tough, you know, life is incredibly difficult" and she remembers how "every day you would see truckloads of people and those people were going to funerals and every week somebody within the shelter has lost somebody". Life is not easy for the Nigerians, according to Kate, but they are very resilient. She recalls that the medical care was dreadful, commenting that "... people who worked in secondary schools hadn't been paid for a year and a half". Niall also spoke about the poverty that he witnessed when working overseas.

For the most part the development workers reported that they had basic but comfortable lives in their placements overseas. They coped well in the circumstances. Brendan states coping meant if you "didn't mind roughing it".

These development workers reported that at a general level they were regarded as foreigners - white people - who were wealthy. Catherine gives her view: "But you know it's like unless somebody gets to know you, you know, you do represent a certain culture to the people and I think, you know, people assume from your skin that you're very wealthy, but also that you're not really helping, saying you are helping and not, so I think it was probably mixed". She recalls how she benefited from her relationships: "What I got from the people, particularly the people that I would meet, you know, generally, daily, great warmth and great welcoming and great patience for the stupid things that I did and particularly the people that I was close to. I just feel that I'm very privileged to have met them". These life experiences, where they witnessed the daily struggles, contributed to their knowledge and understanding of the issues that affect the well-being of people and, in particular, the impact of war.

#### **6.4.4 Reflexivity, Agency and Change**

In common with the personal practice group these development workers are engaged in critical self-reflection as part of their search for meaning and self-fulfilment (Archer, 2000, Roth, 2015). Like the respondents in the personal and practice group these development workers reflected on their work practices and the context of their work. These reflections produced changes in work practices, a questioning of development practice and the role of the short-term development worker.

As noted above careers and changes in work roles are important aspects of these workers' lives in the development field. Reflexivity has played a role in these changes. Niall's move into primary health care is an example of the changes brought about by his reflections on his own work practices. According to him: "... you are trying to help people improve their situation, which is fairly miserable for a lot of them". His work in primary health care taught him that you had to look beyond the provision of medical treatments and take into consideration other things which have an impact on peoples' quality of lives. Conor reflected on how he went about his work in his first stint and decided to return. He recalls how he felt he "... knew how the clinics should be organized and I knew how the staff should be re-organized. So, from the point of view of service delivery to the beneficiaries, I had figured out how it could be done in that environment with all the constraints that existed. There was a way to do it. It was a bit of a Chinese puzzle; it was difficult but it could be done". Brendan also spoke about reflecting on his work practices and questioned how effective their intervention was and what they should prioritise in their work. Brian is reflexive about his work practices and says when you are there you are thinking about what you are doing there. He describes how there is the conflict "between really enjoying this but am I doing any good". Brendan's reflections on his work and the project in general generated a number of criticisms of development practice. He was of the opinion that health promotion was needed in conjunction with the immunisation programmes they ran. Brendan also reflects on how effective their intervention was, and what were the most effective interventions and what they should prioritise. He says "... if I was doing it all again, I would have prioritised health promotion more and yeah about how to work and the importance of partnership but also about yeah, project priorities".

When thinking about their own jobs these development workers reflected on the role of short-term volunteers. They questioned the sustainability of this model of development practice. Brendan made the comparison between short-term development work and the role of the missionaries and concluded that the latter are a lot more successful at what they do because "... they really live the things with the people out there. They don't disappear". Reflecting on the respect locals have for development workers Conor says:

"I think it depends on how you conduct yourself, that is how it will be determined. If you conduct yourself with a big dose of humility and you have a good understanding of the country's history and you have some context of what you are operating in and you give due deference to the local administrative representative of the government and the police and any armed people who are there, to the national staff, you are kind

to them and look after them and protect them, you try and teach them and maintain a sense of humour even when they are stressed, then no matter what country you are in Africa, people will like you, respect you and protect you ultimately and if you have to say no, they will understand that you are not able to say yes for whatever reason and they will accept it! If you are arrogant, lose your temper, get too tired and show it, they will just work around you and ignore you and that is it”.

Education throughout the life course has contributed to knowledge about development and the macro geopolitical issues. Education also facilitated the reflexive processes which generated the types of critical awareness that the post-colonialists see as essential in development. Brendan did a Masters in Humanitarian Assistance to fill all the gaps in his knowledge and describes how the course “helped me understand the bigger picture. I understand all the things that you need to take into account in the context that you need to consider when you’re going to actually do work in that sort of environment. I don’t think I really realised in global terms I was quite naïve when I went out”. The course taught him the language of development, and of humanitarian assistance. Like Robert in the first group, this course gave him the codified knowledge of the development field and development professionals. It also helped him understand the bigger picture. Niall and Conor in the medical field also spoke about the importance of education for their knowledge of development.

#### **6.4.5 Summary**

It is the totality of the work, life and education experiences which have contributed to this group’s understanding of development and the various tensions within these discourses. For this group, the key sources of learning about the geopolitical aspects of development are their professionalised careers where they have a deeper engagement with development organisations formulating and implementing development policies and practices. Formal education has played a significant role in cultivating the type of critical awareness that the post-colonialists refer to. In comparison with the personal practice group this group is motivated by professional interests alongside altruism and personal interests. These professional motivations spurred them on to creating careers for themselves in the development industry. These professionalised careers give them a sense of identity and this is used by them to differentiate themselves from development volunteers. These careers in managerial roles and service provision have broadened their experiences and knowledge of development practice. Moreover, these roles brought them into greater

contact with donor agencies, which gave them experience of the practices and policies of these organisations. The professionalised careers have led to jobs with development organisations thus adding new repertoires of knowledge and practices. Thus, they have acquired a deep knowledge of the development industry which is convinced about the superiority of its Western knowledge and systems of intervention.

The critical analysis of these development workers particularly in relation to geopolitics comes from education and being connected to networks of returned volunteers such as Comhlámh. Indeed, Comhlámh provides a source of identity and opportunities for reflection. Education has provided these development workers with sets of ideas linked with formal knowledge with which to enhance their understanding of development. Education has provided these workers with tools to look at the broader issues and structural impediments to development such as international trade and the policy agendas of international organisations. These critical faculties have enabled them to see the inequalities and injustices which are embedded in the global economic and system. This group reflects on their situations and the world around them using the available sets of ideas from work and education to generate a discourse of development which is more focused on the geo-political aspects such as debt and world trade. This group's discourse is shaped by professionalism in their careers and their reflexivity, using the language and training of the development sector. While they are altruistic and embedded in local communities this has much less influence on their perspectives than the workers in Chapter Five who adopted more practice-focused and participatory discourses.

### **6.5 Learning about Development for The Development Worker ‘Geopolitical and Political Values’ Group**

The discourse of this group of development workers contains many of the critical elements put forward by the post-colonialists. These discourses are multi-dimensional and include ideas related to geopolitics, politics and political values. The key question then is why do they differ from the geopolitical? As will be outlined below the addition of political values to the geopolitical discourse is attributable to a more politicised group of workers and education.



### 6.5.1 Origins and Motivations

This group consists of two distinct sub-groups: the first a group of development workers who are based in Africa and the second development workers who are located in Latin American. Table 6.4 below sets out the profile of the respondents in this group. Two occupational groups stand out in this group: NGO staff, or what can be called development professionals, and those working in community development. The majority of the respondents in this group are still working in the field. The motivations of this group are the same as the geopolitical group workers and were a mix of altruism, personal and professional reasons. However, there is one exception, Aidan, who has an interest in justice and social issues which are linked to his religious faith.

**Table 6.4 Profile of the Respondents in the Geopolitical & Political Values Group**

Pseudo Name	Region	Occupation	Age	Date first went	No of years	Still working
Aidan	Africa	NGO staff / dev Professional	44	1992	4	Yes
Steve	Africa	NGO staff / dev Professional	44	1995	3	Yes
Lucy	Africa	Education	39	1996	4	Yes
Liam	Africa	NGO staff	--	1994	2	Yes
Miriam	Latin America	Community Development	30	1999	3	Yes
Larry	Latin America	NGO staff / dev Professional	47	1980	26	Yes
Fred	Latin America	Community Development	36	1996	2	Yes
Brenda	Latin America	Community Development	30	2002	2	No
Julie	Latin America	Community Development	30	2000	2	No
Gerry	Latin America	Community Development	37	1997	3	Yes
Colin	Latin America	Community Development	43	1994	5	Yes

### 6.5.2 Situated Learning and Work Experiences

The development workers in this group have similar work experiences to the geopolitical group, where they have worked in a variety of jobs and have created careers for themselves in the development industry. In most cases these careers have evolved from work as a volunteer. For the most part those in the geopolitical group were not as embedded in development organisations and did they not see themselves as development

professionals whereas this group sees themselves more as career directed professionals or development professionals. Some of these workers are more deeply embedded in the development industry devising policies and programmes to be implemented in developing countries. Thus, their day to day work practices would be examples of the kinds of practices criticised by the post-colonial theorists including the imposition of Western ideas and approaching development as a technical problem to be solved. These workers are in a world of work that is in some cases more ‘political’ and in others more ‘organisational’ – both through working for, or dealing with, agencies and, in the case of those based in Latin America, they have links to social movements and civil society organisations. Again, managerial roles are a feature of this group and, coupled with their careers, have broadened their experiences and knowledge of development. Work and careers are not the only source of knowledge, as the context of the experiences and education also feature in the process of learning.

The development workers who worked in Latin America learned about politics and political values through the political world of work and the context of their work. Brenda and Miriam, for example, worked in the area of human rights. Brenda’s work involved accompanying displaced communities of Afro-Indigenous people. Part of her work included setting up meetings with the army, the UN, the International Red Cross and other local organisations who had responsibility for the human rights and security of the peace communities and the indigenous people they worked with. Brenda recalls that during her time in Colombia there was a crackdown on the work of the NGOs, especially the International NGOs, because the Government wasn’t really in favour of them working with peace communities or human rights defenders. Miriam would also “accompany a lot of *campesino* organisations who are lobbying against land evictions and trying to find, you know, land for peasant farmers to make their living from”. Brenda and Miriam commented on how these roles contributed to their political awareness.

Another group of Latin America-based volunteers, Fred, Julie and Colin, worked in community development. In common with the workers in the personal practice group and the macro geopolitical group, their work gave them similar insights into participative ways of working and what constitutes best practice.

The geopolitical and political values group also contains a number of development workers who started their journeys as volunteers and ended up making careers for

themselves as development professionals. The world of work for this group has an organisational focus through working for, or having, dealings with development agencies. Larry is a good example of somebody in this category, as he started his journey as a volunteer and quickly forged a career for himself in the development field. His career trajectory has an organisational structure through his work for, and links to, development agencies. He has had a varied career including work in conflict and post- conflict zones, humanitarian relief and development work. Larry's first sojourn in Latin America working with rice producers introduced him to development work. He then took a job with CIIR working with refugees in Honduras, fleeing the conflict in El Salvador. This job entailed setting up maintenance and training workshops in the refugee camps only three kilometres from the main combat zone, where there "was heavy fighting, just literally, visibly from where we were located". This work led him into a managerial role with another agency where he became the national coordinator of the refugee programme in three camps. A large part of Larry's role amongst the refugees was to have an international presence and accompany the refugees. Larry had linkages with the UNHCR. He took another job with the UNHCR which included fundraising and human rights work. He then got a job with an Irish organisation working in Central America in a managerial role. His work was a mix of humanitarian relief and long-term development work. This job involved working with municipal governments, small, local community groups, and NGOs in civil society "trying to look at ways that you could build and increase their capacity". This led to them developing "a full capacity building programme which had local volunteers or local development workers, international development workers, specialists in some areas and some funding to strengthen organizations". Larry has returned to Ireland where he is working in the Irish development / aid industry, focusing on Latin American issues. He maintains: "... obviously I'm bringing twenty odd years of experience, or twenty-five years' experience of development, and particularly the Latin American experience and the skills that go with that".

Gerry's identity has shifted from being a volunteer to a development professional. He views his career as "... a learning process and I suppose that's what I would see, the longer you're in it the more you learn and the more you find out what you actually don't know. You gain the experience that you can look at it more strategically". He started out on his career in development as a volunteer following the completion of a Masters in Development Studies working with an association of cooperatives in Latin America. After Gerry's work with the cooperatives his career in development took a step forward,

when he moved into agricultural rehabilitation work. This work shaped his identity as a development professional and he says he really felt part of the development industry in this job. His managerial roles continued when he moved to Africa, first working as a field officer where "you were kind of expected to manage the context and linkages with other development organizations". After this he moved to work in Rwanda with another Irish NGO where his role "was basically overseeing funding to local partners and a lot of it was kind of policy work as well". The combined organisational and political worlds of work are evident in his emergency and rehabilitation work. Gerry says both he and the organisation he worked for "would have looked at the emergency relief and rehabilitation much longer term in the sense of the impact it would have on people's lives and the way that you'd approach doing it. Let's say that there would be a political agenda for pursuing land rights and trying to get political objectives as well".

In the case of another worker in this group, Aidan, his career has taken him from being a volunteer teacher in Zimbabwe to a desk officer role in an Irish NGO. His first job was teaching in a state-run school in a rural area. His next assignment was in an education and training centre which ran "practical, informal, short courses for adults mainly, like courses on HIV-Aids or primary health care or nutrition or workers' rights or rural development, all those kind of useful courses". His job was "in a kind of a supporting role, kind of doing some research work and also trying to publish a little series of booklets which had been going for years on various development issues". The aim of the pamphlets really was to add to the general social debate in the country, the socio-economic debate. Aidan remarks that there "... were a lot of changes in the country, mainly due to the influence of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund so that kind of called for the need for booklets and research that would try to analyse that". This introduced him to the wider geopolitical issues in development such as a questioning of the role of the World Bank. Following his overseas experience Aidan did a Masters in Peace Studies in Trinity College. This course spurred him on to pursuing a career in the NGO sector and to become a development professional. He has held a number of positions with Irish development agencies and is currently working as a desk officer with an NGO, where the "work is day-to-day support to different countries and the staff in various countries".

Steve started out his development career as a volunteer in Africa and currently works as a desk officer for an Irish development agency. He volunteered for two years and worked

in a local organization called 'Association of Gambian entrepreneurs', who were running micro finance programmes. Steve did a second stint overseas volunteering with a different organisation working in emergency relief. On this he observes that:

"It was kind of a shock for me because it was a much harder environment. It was an emergency context where we had big refugee camps, Liberians mainly, some Sierra Leonians. You have a context where the military and police are, not to put too fine a point on it, brutal to their own people and the poorer you are the more brutal they are to you".

Steve's work as a development professional is similar to Aidan's. Steve describes his job as "like a Programme Officer". Steve has responsibility within the Irish development agency for a number of African countries. Liam has had a varied career in the development field. He joined an Irish NGO as a research advocate where he was editing their journal and writing papers and has been in development education since 1996. Liam is another development worker who has experienced the traumas of working in a post-conflict situation. He went to Rwanda in 1994 six months after the genocide had ended as an assistant programme manager. He remembers that "it was still a country very scarred by the genocide". The challenges for Liam were "dealing with peoples' post-genocide sense of distrust, suspicion. He believed that, as a result of the genocide, the State was in its "own way profoundly or at least potentially repressive". This was a challenge for him in his work because they needed to work with the State but did not wish to confer legitimacy upon it or give it excessive legitimacy.

The organisational world of work for the people in this group is illustrated by their work for development agencies and their managerial roles. A feature of these managerial roles is the high level of strategic planning. Aidan's job as a desk officer, for example, involved devising various programmes, identifying the needs and abilities of the organisations they were assisting. His work also involved consulting local government to see what can be done, what the needs are. Liam's managerial work in Rwanda consisted of working out support strategies for the reconstruction of civil society. He recalls that "... a lot of the work I did in the early stages revolved around the rehabilitation of the local NGO's so processing grant applications from those groups". All these development workers had links with official donors such as the Irish Government, the EU. Gerry had responsibility for funds coming from overseas. His role was to be a link between the funders of programmes. Steve also had a financial role in the job, reviewing budgets and reports. He recalls how the human rights groups needed serious rebuilding because "a lot of these

people had been targeted during the genocide; a lot of their personnel had been killed". Steve's work in the Irish development agency also included an advocacy function, raising awareness about the issues in different countries, trying to get the issue raised on the news or doing advocacy with the Irish Government.

The professionalized careers play an important part in shaping their discourses of development. These careers have given them a range of development experiences and expert knowledge which includes the formulation and implementation of programmes, policies and practices. Their careers have led some of these workers into the world of development agencies. Through their work and career paths they have gained knowledge of the functioning of the international aid system. However, in comparison with other groups of development workers they are less critical of donor agencies and rather point to the elements of best practice, which is linked to their professionalised identities and embeddedness in the development industry. Their political values are linked to the politicised work environments in Latin America and through work with human rights groups and in war and conflict zones. The stories of their careers and work practices further illustrate the professionalisation of the development industry and the dominance of expert Western knowledge.

### **6.5.3 Local Communities and Social Relations**

As has just been discussed the social world of work and wider cultural considerations are a source of learning for the respondents in this group. Another important element which has contributed to their understanding of development is the lived experience and wider community relationships. For some development workers, especially those who are Latin America-based, they were exposed to the political realities which informed their macro political views. These politicised contexts and links to social movements and civil society contributed to the political aspects of their development discourses. Again, a small number of respondents in this group had direct experience of working in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The context of the development experience in Latin America helped to shape Fred's thinking in relation to politics and political values. Fred describes how Nicaragua "... is like having a, not a history lesson but a civics lesson, you know, a social justice lesson in terms of their history". Fred talked about the importance of democracy in the lives of

people and recalls that Nicaragua was "just coming up to a general election and there was huge optimism that the Sandinistas would get back into power. The town where I was it was very much a Sandinista town so they very much hoped that they'd get back into government". Fred talks about how his experience from Nicaragua awakened a sense of justice which really manifested itself when he returned to Ireland. He perceived that the government wasn't working for the people in Nicaragua, that, in fact, APSO was providing the role of the government because the social welfare system didn't really exist. Fred remarks: "So there was injustice there and I opened my eyes to injustice". Fred worked for an environmental organization. He recalls this organization "weren't talking about you know kind of plant life and animal life. They were talking about human rights and they were talking about people having the opportunity to develop themselves".

Conflict and post-conflict situations were part of the experiences for Brenda and Larry in Latin America, as well as those of Steve and Liam in Africa. Liam describes how the genocide had caused a huge rupture in Rwanda society. People were very distrustful of their neighbours and the authorities. The challenges for Liam "were dealing with people's post-genocide sense of distrust and suspicion". There were additional issues in Rwanda "of trauma, of deeply dislocated societies both physically and in many other ways". Life for the majority of people in Rwanda was very tough according to Liam. He says "... they were living in devastated rural areas. They were already extremely poor. They were trying to reconstruct physical infrastructure and also trying to reconstruct society relationships". Brenda worked in a conflict situation in Latin America and remembers how living under the constant threat of war had a profound effect on the lives of the local people. She remembers "... the extreme poverty, because of the army presence in the area, there was a lot of people were afraid to go and cultivate their lands or to go into the fields and get the rice or whatever they were cultivating". She adds, "... it was very difficult for them and there was extreme poverty as well.

These development workers describe what life was like for the local people in the communities they were living in. These experiences also helped to shape their understanding of development and their focus on peoples' well-being. Gerry describes the life of an indigenous Indian community living in the mountains where people were just doing subsistence farming. The "... people had a much more difficult life in terms of services and just poverty". Another view on the poverty in Latin America is given by Fred who worked in Nicaragua:

“For the people themselves, there was a lot of poverty. I hadn’t experienced that kind of poverty. Like El Viejo that previously would have been quite rich agricultural land but now was quite poor because a lot of them, they had depended on cotton and then the cotton industries collapsed which meant that people weren’t able to get enough food for their families. So even around where I was working there were children with swollen bellies and bleached hair, the hair was bleached, because of lack of essential nutrients and that was kind of shocking.”

An account of what life was like in the African context is given by Aidan, who worked in Zimbabwe:

“Being pressurised by international economics and finance and orientating the economy towards a western model. But that meant less investment, for example, in social services so that affected people directly. There was less investment in employment, in social services, in health and education. People had to pay fees that they didn’t have to pay before. Prices were going up whereas wages weren’t. So, they were the kind of life issues that were affecting people and meanwhile the whole economy was depending on agriculture to a large extent and agriculture was prone to bad weather and so some years were very difficult. So that would make life very difficult for the population, eighty per cent of whom were rural subsistence farmers”.

The development workers talked about the relationships they had with the local communities. Larry gives an honest assessment of the relationships he had while working in communities in Central America: "I had two sort of overall experiences, one which was incredibly close with all these different people I knew and very, very warm and very, very understanding and all this sort of stuff and then sort of an experience when they were vulnerable and then when they felt threatened". Larry describes how, over time, he felt "... drawn into the intensity of what was actually happening to these communities and the more in-depth issues around their suffering". This posed an essential challenge or question for Larry, namely, "... was it possible to actually maintain an independent space when you are that close to them? And I arrived at the conclusion that it wasn't". Larry remarks how his "... level of understanding of that society is, how would I say it's very close to people's feelings and how they see things and that's a very, very precious thing to be allowed to share that closely with people, that you can understand where they're coming from a bit more".

The immersion in the local communities was an important element in the process of learning. For example, Brenda talks about learning from the community in Latin America and says: "It seems to be like the way forward for them is like community spirit, small local communities working together supporting themselves and, you know, working together". Gerry said he learned about geopolitics and political values from the people's



lives in Central America. He recalls how "... people are not rewarded for their hard work". He gives the example of the coffee farmers who are vulnerable to the price of coffee, which they have no control over. Land rights were also an issue for the communities. For Gerry "... what land people had access to tended to be of marginal or poor quality". Big landowners and multinational companies "... would own large tracts of land that would be very fertile. This is an example of how the lived experiences contribute to a discourse where geopolitical issues such as fair trade and the practices of multinational companies interact with political values such as rights and peoples' rights to land.

The politicised context, particularly for the Latin America-based development workers, plays a significant role in shaping their understanding of development and the political values they hold. They are living in communities who are being denied their rights and suffering from the inequalities in world trade. The lived experience of all the workers in this group contributes to their understanding of significant factors such as poverty and how they impact on peoples' well-being.

#### **6.5.4 Reflexivity, Agency and Change**

Reflexivity is an important element in the process of learning for the development workers. This reflexivity occurs at two levels, firstly the development workers reflect on their work practices and how they have changed as a result of these reflections. Secondly, they reflect on how their work and careers have contributed to their stock of knowledge about development.

These development workers reflected on their work practices and the context of their work. These reflections, in turn, produced changes in work practices and a questioning of development practice and the role of the short-term development worker. Julie and Fred both talked about how they had to stand back, reflect and figure out what they were doing. In both cases this led them to quickly embrace participative practices. Gerry says: "I definitely changed my expectations of what I could do and what I could achieve and how I approached work". Liam started off with "... very ambitious notions of what kind of level of difference you could make in a situation of enormous disruption and damage". He toned down these ambitions and set more realistic targets in relation to what could be achieved. Reflecting on his approach when he went out first, Larry says he had idealistic

notions where he believed he could fix things. Over time he says this idealism has changed. He says: "I don't think it can be fixed that easy anymore! So, in that sense I would probably have lost some of my idealism". He describes his attitude now: "I have the ability now to be able to sit back from it and think strategically about it". This illustrates the importance of the reflexive capacity in reshaping motivations.

Gerry, Larry and Steve question the volunteer model. Steve, for example, argues that it is important to ensure that there is a right fit of the volunteer and the local organization. However, this isn't always possible especially "... when these organizations are getting the volunteers for free so it is hard for them to say no". Steve is very wary of using school leavers and college students for short-term placements overseas because they have no skills at that stage. He thinks it can be quite dangerous, asking " what value are they adding?"

Reflections on work practices and careers also led to a consideration of broader development issues. As he reflected on his career and roles Larry had to step back from the coalface, and he says: "I think that started to get me to look at other perspectives". He started to think that development is "actually much more policy driven and so you have to start to address some of the policy issues and you have to address some of the structures that need to be addressed". He looks back on the changes he has gone through in his career in development. Looking back on his time in Central America he sees his first two years as a volunteer as an apprenticeship, "very kind of a technical but maybe not seeing the bigger picture and kind of political and social aspects of development". Overall, after twenty years in Central America, Larry believes that "... there are still fundamental issues about kids going to school, about literacy, about participation, about access for women to participate, about gender-based violence issues". Brenda also reflects on the role of the development worker. She believes it's very important to be politically aware of the issues, the underlying factors, the privatization of resources and things like the exploitation of workers and human rights situations. Thus, reflexivity contributes to the political discourses of these workers.

Education was also an important part in the learning process for these development workers and provided them with a critical awareness. Larry who qualified with his Masters in Political Science and Public Administration during his time in in Central America is an example of this. What he liked about the course was looking at things

from a Latin American perspective. There "... was a lot of analysis of sustainable development processes and political processes and human rights processes". Julie, Steve and Aidan all took development related courses on their return to Ireland. Julie says the course contributed to her knowledge of the geopolitical aspects of development. For Aidan, this course gave him formal knowledge about development and development practice and gave him "a chance to I suppose add knowledge in various areas and also to think about what I had been doing and maybe think 'o yeah in hindsight maybe I should have done that differently'. You know I learned from what I had done really". Aidan says the course "... was a great chance just to think about development and think about the year that I'd had and to learn about the issues, the politics of it, the sociology of it and also to learn what I hadn't particularly set out to do, to look at the kind of the peace elements of development and social issues".

There is an intensity to the overseas experience and support networks are very important for the development workers. Aidan says he had a good support network in the organisation in Zimbabwe and he was able to share stories and problems with fellow volunteers. Gerry would also meet up with other APSO volunteers in central America. For Gerry, when he got a bit frustrated with the work, he found it was great to "touch base with other APSO workers that were going through a similar process". It helps to forge their identity as volunteers or development workers. In common with the development workers in the previous groups Comhlámh was an important network for them on their return. Comhlámh provided a network of social solidarity (Roth, 2015), which, in turn, offered an important environment where common values are shared and self-identity is reinforced. Steve maintains that it kept you engaged while Aidan says Comhlámh was extremely useful because he "... met large groups of people in a very organised way with a specific focus of working with people who had returned back from the Developing World". Fred talked about the importance of Comhlámh groups such as *trade justice* which kept him informed of development issues. However, for these development workers Comhlámh had a life span. A time would come, as Aidan says, when they would no longer be a returned development worker.

### 6.5.5 Summary

The process of learning for the group with the political values and geopolitical discourses is similar to that of the geopolitical group where professional motivations, professional work practices and careers along with education are the key sources of learning. Overall,

altruism and a mixture of personal and professional motivations influence their entry into the field and their career decisions over the life course. This group see themselves more as career-directed professionals or development professionals. Linking their professional and altruistic motivations and their concern for the well-being of the people these workers can be regarded as what Roth (2015) calls passionate professionals. Their professionalised careers give them a sense of identity and this is used by them to differentiate themselves from development volunteers.

In comparison with the geopolitical group this cohort are in a world of work and community that is generally much more 'political' or 'organisational' both through working for, or dealing with, agencies and also, in Latin America in particular, with their links to social movements and civil society. The organisational world of work is illustrated clearly by their work for development agencies and their managerial roles in the development field. It must be noted that these professionalised work experiences reveal a practice of development which is interventionist and imposes Western ideas and solutions. The work histories also tell a story of development workers who are trying to work and make sense of the contradictions of delivering aid whilst at the same time embracing participative practices and involving the 'subaltern'. The managerial roles also highlight the power that is attached to such roles. These longer-term careers have given these respondents insights into the geopolitical and political values that are prominent in their discourses.

A significant number of the development workers in this group have forged out professionalised careers in the development sector. They are part and parcel of an international development industry which has been built up on the backs of devising interventionist strategies for developing countries using Western ideas and knowledge. These interventionists practices are implemented under the cloak of participation.

The political world of work and community is a distinguishing feature of the experiences of the Latin America based respondents. The source of their political values is quite different from the missionaries in the political values group and is not connected to religious beliefs. All were working in highly politicised societies which gave them an education in politics, whether it was working and living in the midst of elections or being involved with civil society organisations campaigning for justice and rights.

Education has also been an important source of knowledge and introduced many to the macro issues in development. Formal education has provided these workers with what Wenger (1998) calls an educational imagination. This in turn produces another set of available ideas which they draw on when formulating their discourses of development. The critical analysis of these development workers particularly in relation to the political aspects of development comes from education and being connected to networks of returned volunteers such as Comhlámh. Education has provided these workers with tools to look at the broader issues and structural impediments to development such as international trade and the policy agendas of international organisations. These critical facilities have enabled them to see the inequalities and injustices which are embedded in the global economic and political systems. It must be noted that this macro political group contains one development worker based in Africa who traces his political values to his Christian beliefs.

## **6.6 Chapter Conclusions**

The overarching aim of the chapter was to explain where the broad political concepts of development come from. The essential goal was to figure out how the respondents with these groups learn about development. What are the key sources of learning? What explains the differences between the groups? The key findings of this chapter are that: the broader contexts in the world of work, such as careers, work and linkages with development agencies, coupled with the political and ideological context of the experiences shape their discourses of development. However, the combination of these experiences varies across the different groups.

Those adopting a political values discourse are missionaries who, for the most part, are located in Latin America and embedded in the community, living in highly politicised societies where inequalities and injustice prevail. The work of these missionaries is underpinned and structured by their religious beliefs. Liberation Theology is the perspective they use to interpret the world they inhabit.

Those who adopt the geopolitical discourses are a more professionalised group of development workers. The world of work includes a wide range of interactions with a variety of actors including donor agencies. Education has also played a significant part

in what some have called a broadening in their thinking and providing them with a critical awareness.

There is a group of development workers who adopt a multidimensional discourse of development which includes political values and geopolitics. Here there are distinct development worker and missionary versions. The missionary group is similar to the political values group and again they are located in Latin America and embedded in the community and living in highly politicised societies where inequalities and injustice prevail. Particular work roles and education play a significant role in shaping their development discourses.

The development worker cohort, who share this multidimensional discourse, have traits that are similar to the geopolitical group. However, this group see themselves more as career directed professionals or development professionals. They are in a world of work and community that is generally much more 'political' or 'organisational', both through working for, or dealing with agencies. The source of their political values is quite different from the missionaries in the political values group and is not connected to religious beliefs. All were working in highly politicised societies which gave them an education in politics, whether it was working and living in the midst of elections or being involved with civil society organisations campaigning for justice and rights. The geopolitical discourses are shaped by the breadth of the experiences they had throughout their careers and education.

In summary, the development workers who hold the macro political discourses are a younger and more professionalised and inhabit an organisational world of work embedded in development agencies. This compares with the voluntaristic characteristic of the development workers in the personal practice groups. This world of work is structured around the primacy of Western knowledge and providing solutions to technical problems, though tempered by incorporating the 'subaltern' through participative practices. These groups, most especially those based in Latin America in addition to the context of poverty and need highlighted by those in the practice groups, have experiences of working in more politicised environments which play an important role in shaping their development ideas.

In general, a feature of the process of learning amongst the development workers and missionaries in these four groups is the degree to which they engage in, or develop, a capacity for reflexivity. They use the experiences and knowledge they have acquired in the field to evaluate their work practices and make the necessary changes in these practices. Part of this reflexive process is an evaluation of their commitments (Archer, 2000; Sayer, 2011). These political discourses also signify their ethical dispositions and concern for the other (Sayer, 2011). For the missionaries their ethical dispositions are wrapped up in their religious beliefs and theological perspectives. Moreover, as Goulet (1997, p.1161) reminds us, development is "above all else a question of values and human attitudes".

---

### 7.1 Introduction

In the development field knowledge is stratified between theory and practice both running in parallel lines. The theoretical level is concerned with defining what the goals of development should be. The development practice literature is focused on the means of achieving these development goals. In the midst of these literatures the place of religion has been neglected and the role of the development worker has been overlooked. More recently, however, authors have examined the individual development worker, and their work has focused on development worker motivations, values, work and biographies to get a better understanding of who these actors are and how they go about their work. Other studies within the development literature have made the case for including religious values when discussing development. This thesis has endeavored to contribute to these debates by examining two research questions: Firstly, what are the variety of discourses of development held and used by Irish development workers and missionaries? Secondly, how are those discourses of development shaped by the biographies and contexts of development workers and missionaries, both during and outside development work? This thesis not only examined the development discourses of Irish missionaries and development workers but investigated the process of learning that occurs through the life course in the development field that generated these discourses.

The structure of the Irish development field provided an appropriate case for investigating these research questions because of the range of actors involved and these include the State, Civil Society (NGOs) and Religious. The uniqueness of the Irish development field according to OECD (1999) is the direct contact the Irish field has with the developing world fostered initially by missionaries and further strengthened by development volunteers. This Irish development field has been imbued with religious and secular values.

In order to answer the first research question (what are the variety of discourses of development held and used by Irish missionaries and development workers?) I drew on the theoretical debates about the discourses of development and the development practice literature. The literature on the theories of development, as outlined in Chapter Two,



highlighted the current and historical range of discourses and debates in the field. These have been on the one hand critical and the other constructive, offering alternative analytical frames. Critical accounts such as the post-colonial perspective seeks to deconstruct the idea of development and identifies structural sources of inequality and injustice embedded in the global economic and political system which can be traced back to the colonialism. Alternatives such as human development positions people as the ends of development. The bulk of this literature consists of what Burawoy (2004) calls 'reflexive knowledge', focusing on investigating the ends of development and the values that underpin these authors' perspectives. The reflexive, theoretical perspectives, and the human development lens in particular along with the critical lens of post-colonialism provide a conceptual map for classifying and analysing the development discourses of both the missionaries and development workers which were analysed in Chapter Four. Human development and the capabilities approach assisted in the analysis of the development discourses because they set out what dimensions of human well-being need to be taken into consideration such as: health, education, living standards and political governance. The post-colonial approach facilitated the analysis of the critical accounts embedded in the discourses. The work of Robeyns (2017) provided a multidimensional capabilities framework for categorising and conceptualising the development worker discourses. Another set of literature which focused on the instrumental knowledge about the practice of development helped to illustrate the means and constraints which affect an individual's well-being.

In order to answer the second research question, I used two sets of literature as an analytical frame which helped to explain and understand the process of learning in which these development workers and missionaries are engaged. Firstly, I used the theoretical perspective of learning through practice, namely situated learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991) to understand how the different elements (their motivations, work practices, careers and social relations) come together as a process in which Irish development workers and missionaries learned about development. To explain the development workers' relationship with the world and their underlying ethics and beliefs I used the work of Sayer (2011). This was complemented by the work of Archer (2000) and Sayer (2005) who draw attention to the role that reflexivity plays in who and what a person is. Understanding the beliefs, values, practices and reflectivity of these Irish practitioners informed how the discourses of development are arrived at.

Investigating the careers, life histories and contexts of the experiences in the development field assists in answering the second research question outlined above, namely what shapes the development understanding of Irish development workers and missionaries? This field of literature helps our understanding of what kinds of situations, work relations for example, tend to generate certain frames. Why do different groups of development workers and missionaries come to frame development in different ways? How is this process shaped by their generation, occupation, gender, region, life experiences, and political and discursive context? My contribution to the literature is to draw on these different approaches not only to examine development practice but also to reveal the development understanding of the Irish development workers and missionaries. It was important, therefore, to examine the life journeys because "... the individual life situations and motivations of aid workers matter in how their work is accomplished - they rarely act as the mere conduits that some in central office expect them to - as they are enmeshed in networks that include other aid workers, local interlocutors and their own families" (Hindman and Fechter, 2011, p.4).

I have applied Roth's work on the nature of work in development to the Irish case of missionaries and development workers. These Irish practitioners have similar experiences to Roth's. I have also used Fechter to demonstrate how the individual life situations and motivations of aid workers matter in how their work is accomplished. Moreover, I am contributing to this debate by examining the development understanding of these workers and their processes of learning which Kaplan (1999) argues have been "entirely removed from the picture" (Kaplan, 1999, p.6). As has been demonstrated in Chapters Five and Six the motivations and beliefs, whether they be altruism, personal and professional as identified by Roth, ultimately influence the development discourses held by these workers. Altruism informs the types of jobs and roles undertaken. The professional motivations have spurred people on to careers in the development sector. These wider work experiences have introduced them to a wide range of development actors and experiences. They have acquired a professional prism through which they view the development world and this accounts for their concern with best practice in the field. This professional prism valorises expert knowledge and criticises the use of volunteers. Further education and training also result from these professional motivations, where they have increased their stock of technical knowledge and also attained a critical

awareness of the broader issues such as aid and trade. My study also shows how aspects of aid workers' lives, as identified by Roth (2015), such as the search for meaningful work, have influenced the work practices, roles and careers of Irish development workers and missionaries and these have been documented in Chapters Five and Six. My research also focuses on the reflexive capacity of the development worker which Roth (2015) refers to and traces this into the work practices and changing work practices of the Irish development workers and missionaries. This reflexive capacity in turn contributes to their knowledge and understanding of development.

The thesis adopted a comparative qualitative approach with the aim of finding commonalities in the development understanding. This study is a case study of the development understanding of Irish development practitioners. The Irish case contains a comparative analysis of two distinct groups of actors: development workers and missionaries. There is a further comparative element in that these actors are working in, or have worked in, either Africa or Latin America. Development workers and missionaries are comparable groups. As noted in Chapter One missionaries and missionary organisations were the pioneers of the Irish development field. Religious are once again deemed important actors in the development field. Following in the missionary footsteps Irish development workers have contributed greatly to the Irish development sector. Another source of comparison is the different generations of missionaries and development workers. These differences help us understand the role played by different generations of ideologies and belief systems in shaping their work practices and understanding of development. The regional locations of Africa and Latin America allow for comparisons of development practices and thinking in different cultural, social and political contexts. Issues such as poverty, poor health and education systems and corruption are similar across these regions. Notwithstanding the differences referred to above this comparative approach is important for identifying and verifying common themes across all groups of development workers and missionaries.

## **7.2 Research Findings: Discourses of Development**

What are the findings of my research? Table 7.1 below is a summary of the Irish missionary and development worker discourses of development and the ideas and themes they contain. The table highlights the different dimensions along which these discourses of human development vary. These dimensions range from personal development through

ideas related to practice to political values and geopolitical critiques. The table illustrates a core finding of my research that the various ideas and themes combine in different ways to form particular discourses of development. And there are essentially five different discourses or seven if we include missionary and development worker versions. The table also highlights another finding of my research which is that ideas or themes do not merely combine in a simple linear fashion but vary a bit. The political values discourse for example does not contain a critique of practice nor does it contain a geopolitical critique. The combined development worker political values and geopolitical discourse does not contain the personal dimension. Table 7.1 also highlights not only the common dimensions of the missionary and development worker discourses but also the distinct differences in these discourses, with for example religious values prominent in the missionary discourses.

**Table 7.1 Summary of the Seven Development Discourses**

Development Discourses						
Personal – Practice Discourses			Macro Political Discourses			
	Missionary	Development Worker	Missionary	Missionary	Development Worker	Development Worker
<b>Personal</b>	<b>Personal Practice</b>	<b>Personal Practice</b>	<b>Politics &amp; Political Values</b>	<b>Geopolitical &amp; Political Values</b>	<b>Geopolitical</b>	<b>Geopolitical &amp; Political Values</b>
<i>Ideas mentioned</i>	<i>Ideas mentioned</i>	<i>Ideas mentioned</i>	<i>Ideas mentioned</i>	<i>Ideas mentioned</i>	<i>Ideas mentioned</i>	<i>Ideas mentioned</i>
Religious	Religious		Religious	Religious		
Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development	Personal Development		
	Participation	Participation	Participation	Participation	Participation	Participation
	Criticisms of Development Practice	Criticisms of Development Practice		Criticisms of Development Practice	Criticisms of Development Practice	Criticisms of Development Practice
			Rights, Justice, Equality, Democracy	Rights, Justice, Equality, Democracy		Rights, Justice, Equality, Democracy
				Fair Trade, Criticism of Policies of IMF & World Bank	Fair Trade, Criticism of Policies of IMF & World Bank	Fair Trade, Criticism of Policies of IMF & World Bank

What conclusions can be drawn from the findings in relation to the discourse of development? The capabilities framework as proposed by Robeyns (2017) provided a

practical basis for classifying and analysing these development discourse. This frame as has been illustrated in this thesis provides a mechanism for incorporating both practice related ideas and more theoretical ideas into distinctive development discourses. The frame also allows for a plurality of discourses to emerge through exploring the various combinations of dimensions and themes. Thus, when thinking about development, it is important to not only be clear as to what the ends of development are and the appropriate means for achieving these ends but also to reflect on the structural constraints that negatively impact these goals. The discourses outlined in this thesis also highlight the importance of the underlying ethics and values on which these discourses are framed.

The different combination of ideas and themes are evident in all seven different discourses. Reviewing these discourses, it is clear that both the missionaries and development workers have clarity about what they consider to be the ends of development. They are primarily concerned with the well-being of the individual and this is strongly linked to the sense of altruism and to the religious beliefs of the missionary cohort. What the seven discourses reveal is that there are different views on what are the appropriate means to achieve these goals. For some these goals are achieved through various forms of development practice and for other these goals are achieved through macro political processes.

Table 7.1 highlights the combination of ideas in each discourse. The first discourse focuses on the personal and is limited to ideas related to personal development and dimensions of well-being. This is predominantly an elderly religious cohort whose traditional religious values underpin their definition of personal development. The next two discourses, one development worker and one missionary, cover the same personal practice themes, however, they do not include any political dimensions. The means for achieving the goal of personal development and well-being is participation and the sustainability of projects. Like the post-colonialists they believe in the importance of including the 'subaltern' in decision making processes. These discourses draw attention to structural constraints particularly associated with the practices of donors, whose requirements seriously impact the running of projects and thus practice ideas are firmly linked with individual well-being. These two groups adopt one of the critical claims of the post-colonialists and reject the principle of the imposition of Western ideas and solutions. There are differences between the two discourses where the personal is

interlinked with religious beliefs and values for the missionaries and secular ideas such as fulfil potential are used by the development workers.

There are four macro political discourses which are multifaceted and include the type of critical analysis that post-colonial theorists call for. To varying degrees these discourses, highlight economic and political structures of inequality and injustice which impede development. The first two adopt different approaches to the political, one is closely interlinked with religious beliefs while the other is more secular focusing on geopolitics and the policy regimes of international organisations. The religious political values discourse is more focused on values and morality, where there are connections between personal development, religious beliefs and political values and processes. Political values are informed by their religious beliefs, wherein ideas such as rights, justice and equality figure prominently and these are interlinked with ideas such as the dignity of the person. These political values have been shaped by liberation theology. This theological perspective in turn drew on ideas promoted by dependency theorists. Political processes at local and national level are seen as constraints on the well-being of the person and the community. These missionaries are concerned about the political structures handed down from colonial times which enshrine systems of inequality and injustice. However, it is striking that these missionaries do not emphasise a critique of development practice – their focus is on the values that underpin development action at both micro and macro level but they have much less to say about the geopolitical dimensions. The development worker geopolitical discourse also focuses on the macro political but approaches this in a different way. Here politics operates at the level of the organisation and at the international level. They question the broad thrust of the Washington consensus and the role of the INGOs in development. The policies and practices of these international organisations and international trade policies foster inequality and injustice in the global economic system and are seen as structural constraints impacting on the well-being of the person. This group is particularly concerned with participation, sustainability and best practice.

The second two are multidimensional discourses which combine ideas related to political values and geopolitical critiques and have missionary and development worker versions. Again, these discourses are in tune with the critical voices of post-colonial theorists. A unique feature of the missionary group compared with the development worker is the

inclusion of the personal expressed in religious terms and linked to political values. For the Latin America-based practitioners political processes such as democracy and citizenship are seen as macro constraints on the well-being of the person and the community. Political values such as rights, justice and equality figure prominently in the discourses. Again, for the missionaries these are informed by their religious beliefs, and are interlinked with ideas such as the dignity of the person. Well-being is linked to the policies and practices of international organisations and international trade policies. The development worker group is particularly concerned with participation, sustainability and best practice. There is a tension in the development discourse of this group on the one hand they question international structures which cause injustice. On the other, they accept the logic of intervention based on the use of Expert Western ideas and solutions. These forms of intervention are considered to be improved by means of participative practices.

The findings in Table 7.1 highlight the main difference between the development worker and missionaries is the inclusion of religious themes in the missionary personal development narratives, often linked to different notions of personal development that emphasise personal formation rather than personal choice. There are also distinct interlinkages between religious beliefs and political values in the missionary political discourses. At the macro level another difference is that missionaries do not have discourses which include only the geopolitical and development workers do not have discourses which consist solely of the macro political values. The findings also revealed distinct generational differences particularly across the missionary groups. The next question this thesis addressed was how are these discourses formulated and what is the process of learning in each discourse?

### **7.3 Research Findings: The Process of Learning that Generates these Discourses**

This thesis has identified the process of learning that generates these discourses. The key factors in the process of learning are the combination of: their motivations and underlying beliefs and values, situated learning through work practices, local and social relations and reflexivity, agency and change. Another finding of this thesis is how variations in each of these learning processes shape the discourses that missionaries and development workers adopt. And how some elements are more important for some discourses than others with for example, motivation linked to their belief system the dominant aspect for

traditional missionaries; work and community dominant in the process for the development practice oriented development workers and work and reflection are the main features for development worker geopolitical group. Thus, these different elements come together in different ways to constitute a distinct process of learning for the respondents in each discourse. The differences across the seven discourses are explained by the differences in some, if not all, the elements, that is different work experiences and / or different discursive contexts. A summary of the processes of learning that generate each of the seven discourses is summarised in Table 7.2 below.

Table 7.2 also highlights that there are common elements in their biographies and process of learning which all missionaries and development workers share. Altruism features in all their motivations and there is what the post-colonialists call a degree of ‘othering’ in these motivations. The experiences of work in the development field are similar to the findings in Roth’s study where work requires flexibility, autonomy, and their work is demanding and they have limited resources. All the development workers and missionaries reported that in their local and social relations they witnessed the daily struggles of the people. These experiences were particularly informative about the needs and well-being of the individual. All of the respondents engaged in some form of reflexivity on their role and work practices. This not only resulted in changes in work practices but also contributed to their understanding of development. Alongside the common elements the thesis identified life history factors that relate to more specific contexts and particular work histories, relations with local communities and the ideas and contexts that shape reflexivity and agency. These different factors are also presented in table 7.2.

The key factors in the process of learning of the personal group is their vocational motivation which includes a traditional vision of mission as ‘doing’ The group with the ‘personal discourse’ – conforms largely to a traditional ‘missionary’ life history. For the most part, they are an elderly cohort who are retired. Work is service provision in health, education and there are priests with no specialism, their work is located within the institutional setting of the church, hospital or school. They have limited social relations with the local community and therefore less witness to community struggles. They engaged in limited reflexivity. Overall, the combination of religious ideology and hierarchical, formal work structures explains the narrow range of development discourses limited to personal development and dimensions of well-being. This group serves to



highlight the traditional forms of mission centred on conversion and the 'civilising mission' activities which have been handed down since colonialism which Tomalin (2018) speaks of.

Table 7.2 The Process of Learning for Each of the Discourses								
Personal – Practice Discourses				Macro Political Discourses				
	Common elements	Personal	Missionary Personal Practice	Development Worker Personal Practice	Missionary Politics & Political Values	Missionary Geo political & Political Values	Development Worker Geo political	Development Worker Geo political & Political Values
<b>Work Areas</b>		Priest, Health, Education.	Health, Education, Community development.	NGO work, Education, Community development	Priest no occupation, Health, Community development	Priest no occupation, Community development.	Health, NGO work, Education.	NGO work, Community development.
<b>Origins-Entry to the field</b>		Entered the field in the 1950s & 60s Pre-Vatican II. Retired.	Entered the field in the 1960s & 70s. Post-Vatican II.	Entered the field in the 1980s & 90s. Development volunteers.	Entered the field in the 1960s & 70s. Post-Vatican II.	Entered the field in the 1960s & 70s. Post-Vatican II	Development volunteers & Development professionals.	Development professionals.
<b>Motivations</b>	Altruism	Vocation.  Traditional notion of Mission as 'doing'.	Vocation.  Expanded notion of Mission as doing, being and sharing.	Personal Development.	Vocation  Mission is doing, being and sharing & rooted in Liberation Theology.	Vocation  Mission is doing, being and sharing & rooted in Liberation Theology.  Stronger initial 'political' framing of issues	Personal & Professional.	Personal & Professional.  More likely to see selves as 'development professionals'
<b>Work practices</b>	Flexible, demanding work. Autonomy with poor resources.	Service provision  Within the institutional setting of the church, hospital or school.	Participative work practices.  Dealings with donors.	Participative work practices.  Dealings with donors.  Overcommitted to work and lack of work life balance.	Work and community engagement puts them in contact with very impoverished communities	Work and community engagement puts them in contact with very impoverished communities	Professionalised work  Career structures and management.  Overcommitted to work.	Professionalised work.  Career structures within the development sector.  Overcommitted to work.
<b>Local &amp; Social relations</b>	Witness the daily struggles of the people.	Limited social relations with local community.  Less witness to community struggles	Living and working in the community	Living and working in the community  Increase participatory engagement over their biography	Politicised context of the work experiences in Latin America	Politicised context of the work experiences in Latin America	Living and working in the community	Politicised context of life experiences in Latin America  Some stronger links to movements and civil society e.g., in Latin America
<b>Reflexivity, Agency &amp; Change</b>	Engaged in reflexivity on their roles and work practices.	Limited reflexivity.	Education facilitated further reflection and job changes.	Education facilitated further reflection and job changes.	Importance of theological perspectives.  Availability of Liberation theology a source of meaning and identity.	Education provides a set of ideas about broader development issues.  Availability of Liberation theology a source of meaning and identity.	Networks of development workers	Education and development worker networks through their professionalised roles within the sector.
<b>Summary of key biographical influences on discourses</b>		Traditional notions of mission in the context of religious institution	Expanded notion of mission, incorporating community ties and participation	Participatory provision and development of services	Deep community engagement, interpreted through lens of theological concerns and ideas from Liberation Theology	Deep community engagement, interpreted through lens of political concerns and ideas from Liberation Theology	Professionalised work and careers and networks of development workers are important contexts for learning and reflection	Careers as 'development professionals'.  Engagement with movements, education and development worker networks.

There are two personal practice discourses one missionary the other development worker. Both groups share key factors in the process of learning and these are work and community. In comparison with the personal group these workers have tight relations to the local community where they spend most of their time. The missionary personal practice group emphasise the linking of personal formation and community participation and is, in many respects, an ‘updating’ of the classic missionary approach to include ideas such as doing, being and sharing. The majority of the respondents are still working in the field and are a younger generation who first went overseas post-Vatican II. This group is predominantly made up of religious sisters who are based in Africa and work in the health sector, indicating the significant effect that gender roles and differences within the church play. Their work involves participative practices and is focused on immersive social service work embedded in the community. The medical work involves looking beyond health provision to other quality of life issues such as access to clean water and education. These missionaries had some dealings with donors and experienced some of the deficiencies in the practices of these organisations, particularly in relation to the imposition of Western solutions on local communities. Education facilitated further reflection on their work practices which led to job changes.

The development group is best described as one containing volunteers motivated by personal goals. The majority of the respondents went overseas in the late 1980s and 1990s, spent two years abroad based in Africa and are no longer working in the field. These workers were engaged in NGO work, education and community development. As development workers they share the work practices of the missionaries, that being altruistic selfless work immersed in the communities and participative in nature. They had a similar range of experiences when dealing with donors. There is a degree of mobility amongst the respondents in this group as they change jobs to deepen their experiences and search for meaningful work. These workers are overcommitted to their work and there is a lack of a work life balance. Education facilitated further reflection on their work practices which led to job changes. Overall, the participatory practices and dealing with donors explains the personal practice development discourses and their rejection of the imposition of Western ideas and solutions.

When we come to the macro political discourses the key factors in the process of learning are the broader contexts in which these development workers operate. Careers, embeddedness with development organisations, political contexts and ideologies are the

main sources of learning about development. However, these elements operate in different ways for the different groups of development workers.

Those who adopt the political values discourse are for the most part missionaries based in Latin America, who are embedded in the community. They became missionaries post Vatican II in the 1960s and 70s. They have a broader sense of mission which is rooted in Liberation Theology. Their work and engagement in the community puts them in contact with very impoverished and in some cases oppressed communities. They also work and live in politicised contexts particularly in Latin America. The reflexivity and agency of this group is driven by their theological perspectives, where Liberation Theology is a source of meaning and identity. This group has a deep community engagement, interpreted through the lens of theological concerns coupled with ideas from Liberation Theology.

Those who adopt the geopolitical discourse are a mix of volunteers and development professionals, who work in health, education and for NGOs. They are motivated by personal and professional goals. They are engaged in professionalised work and management roles that provide career structures, which give them a sense of identity. These development workers reported how overcommitted they were to their work. These workers are living and working in the community. Networks such as Comhlámh also provide a source of identity and opportunities for reflection. Education also played a part in this process of learning and has provided these development workers with certain sets of ideas linked with formal knowledge about international trade and the policy agendas of international organisations. This group reflects on their situations and the world around them using the available set of ideas from work and education to generate a discourse of development which is more focused on the geo-political aspects of development such as debt and world trade. The key sources of learning for this group are the professionalised careers and education.

There are two groups one development worker and the other missionary who adopt both political values and the geopolitical. The missionaries who adopt the political values and geopolitical discourse are based in Latin America and are embedded in the community. They became missionaries post Vatican II in the 1960s and 70s. They have a broader sense of mission which is rooted in Liberation Theology, however, there is a stronger political framing of issues. Their work and engagement in the community puts them in

contact with very impoverished and in some cases oppressed communities. They also work and live in politicised contexts particularly in Latin America. Education provides them with a set of ideas about the broader geopolitical issues of development. This group has a deep community engagement, interpreted through the lens of political concerns coupled with ideas from Liberation Theology.

The process of learning for the development worker group with the political values and geopolitical discourse is similar to that of the development worker geopolitical group. Professional motivations, professional work practices and careers, along with education, are the key sources of learning. The development workers consist of two distinct groups: those who are based in Africa-and those who are located in Latin America. Two occupational groups stand out - NGO staff or what can be called development professionals and those working in community development. This group contains a professionalised group who have found definite career structures and are still working within the Irish development sector. This professionalised world of work is structured around the primacy of Western knowledge and what critics claim as providing solutions to technical problems. These professionalised careers give them a sense of identity and they use this, in turn, to differentiate themselves from development volunteers. A distinguishing feature of the experiences of the Latin America-based respondents is the politicised context of their work and life environments, however, the source of their political values is quite different from the religious in the political values group and is not connected to religious beliefs. All were working in highly politicised societies which gave them an education in politics, whether it was working and living in the midst of elections or being involved with civil society organisations campaigning for justice and rights. Education has also been an important source of knowledge and introduced many to the macro issues in development. Reflexivity and agency occur through education and development worker networks through their professionalised roles within the sector.

In summary, Table 7.2 and the accounts of the processes of learning for each of the seven discourses highlight how the different elements in the process combine to create an available set of ideas that make up their understanding and discourses of development. Work is one of the most important sources of knowledge about development. However, the accounts reveal that motivations and beliefs can structure work experiences, such as ideas of mission structuring the work practices of the religious or the professional

motivations impacting on career choices. Work practices are also affected by the context of the experiences whether in politicised environments or conflict and post-conflict situations. Work and careers are also a source of meaning and identity for these development workers, whether it is the occupation of the religious sisters or Liberation Theology for the priest or the professionalised careers for the development workers. Education and reflexivity also contribute to the available set of ideas these development workers draw on. These Missionaries and development workers not only engage in reflexive interaction with their wider social environment, highlighted by Roth (2015), but they also reflect on their roles and work practices and institute changes based on these reflections. Education and training also feed into these reflective processes, whether providing knowledge and skills as new sets of ideas to draw upon. Education courses have also provided formal knowledge about the practice of development and introduced these practitioners to the broader issues pertaining to development such as aid and trade.

#### **7.4 Concluding Remarks**

What do these findings tell us about development discourses and how do they contribute to the overall debate and what do the findings of this research add to the literature on the biographies of development workers? What are the implications of my findings?

The thesis contributes to the debates within the development literature on two fronts, firstly the thesis has documented how reflexive knowledge and instrumental knowledge combine to form coherent discourses of development. Second, it investigated why particular development workers adopted particular discourses of development, through an analysis of their varying motivations and entry to the field, their work situations, their social relations and place in local communities and their own reflexive agency. This thesis builds on the work of Fechter, Roth and Eyben whose focus is on understanding the work histories of development workers, but adds to them by linking these experiences to the development workers' understanding of development.

In relation to the first contribution this thesis has investigated the variety of development discourses held by development workers, which included a deeper understanding of how the themes linked together within those discourses and the ethical and political dispositions involved. This thesis shows how within capabilities frame as outlined by Robeyns (2017) theoretical ideas related to reflexive knowledge focusing on the ends of

development can interact with instrumental ideas focusing on the means of development. This stands in contrast to the view held by Escobar (1995) that development discourse is totalizing, offering a 'one true way' and suppressing alternative views. This thesis confirms what Apthorpe and Gasper (1996) argue, namely that discourse includes practice and theory, however the thesis shows that discourses aren't linear. It is not simply about the combination of ideas from theory and practice rather the interlinkage between these sets of ideas that create a coherent discourse of development. This thesis has illustrated this through identifying the ideas, themes and linkages that the seven different discourses of development contain. The thesis also demonstrated how religious values can be incorporated into development discourse, thus confirming the argument put forward by theorists such as Spies and Schrode and Tomalin that religious values and practices play a role in shaping people's understanding of development. The findings of the thesis show how religious values dovetail with ideas from human development to make coherent discourses focused on the well-being of the individual. Similarly, my research demonstrates how religious and political values can come together to raise concerns of how oppression, abuses of human rights and inequalities function as constraints on the well-being of the individual. Most of the Irish missionaries are trying to break free from the ideas and practices of a Church where the colonial, Christian ideologies continue to infuse society with hegemonic undertones of privilege based on religion and race (Bandyopadhyay, 2019).

The second major contribution of the thesis has been to draw on the literature on the development worker to identify the main elements that make up their biographies. The thesis then examined how elements such as motivations, work practices, careers along with reflexivity combine within the frame of learning through practice to generate the different discourses of development. The findings of this thesis suggest that these elements combine in different ways to create different processes of learning for each of the seven discourses. An example of this is how religious beliefs interact with political contexts to contribute to the political values discourse of the religious. The processes of learning for each of the seven discourses highlight how the different elements in the process combine to create an available set of ideas that make up their understanding and discourses of development. Ultimately this thesis builds on the work of Fechter, Roth and Eyben whose focus is on understanding the work histories of development workers, but adds to them by linking these histories to the development workers' understanding of development.

Another contribution of this thesis has been to investigate the work of religious within the frame of the literature on the development practitioner. Using this frame, the thesis identified the main elements that make up their biographies. In so doing the thesis draws attention to how the broader idea of mission of doing, being and sharing as outlined by Dorr functions in the work practices of these missionaries and how this idea of mission is interlinked with their theological perspectives.

There are implications of my research for development theory and at the policy / practice level. As discussed, the implications at the theoretical level are the benefit of linking two sets of literature and examining the interlinkages between them to further our understanding of development discourse. Secondly the thesis makes the case for taking 'human development-oriented development workers seriously. However, the findings also suggest that there is a need to include a critical analysis such as the type offered by post-colonialists when using a capabilities / human development approach. Adopting a human development approach on its own can lead to a focus on service delivery instead of analysing the structural constraints such as the global economic and political structures and policies that lead to injustice and inequality. Human development without a critical edge can reinforce an interventionist model of development based on the imposition of Western ideas and solutions. The thesis has examined the work situations community relations and the contexts of development experiences. The thesis has demonstrated how these experiences shape development worker understanding of development and as a result there are implications for policy and practice. These findings confirm how sending organisations and development workers need training and education on the contexts and community relations and cultural sensitivities prior to entering the field. The design of work placements should also take into consideration of how these factors shape the development workers understanding of development.

There are aspects of the development literature that question the role of development workers and characterise them as globalisers as mere agents of development organisations, promoting the idea of development. On the other hand, these workers are exhorted to have a critical awareness of development issues. The findings of my research endeavour to highlight what constitutes a critical awareness. The findings suggest that development workers need to be aware of how development practice focused on the imposition of solutions by donors and based on the superiority of Western knowledge



and expertise has implications for the well-being of the individual. This type of practice perpetuates what the post-colonialists see as ‘othering’. Another aspect of having a critical awareness is the ability to make connections for example between local development processes and broader geopolitical policies such as fair trade, debt, structural adjustment and political values such as human rights and equality and how these issues directly impact on the lives of people in developing countries. These workers also need to be aware of cultural and political contexts.

The development literature highlighted how the professionalisation of the development field has entailed a distancing of development professionals from the beneficiaries of development assistance. This is confirmed in my research; however, this thesis has shown how important the lived experience has been for these professionalised development workers and how it has shaped their understanding of development. Therefore, the professionalised development sector needs to ensure that these professionalised development workers maintain a meaningful close connection to developing countries and the recipients of development assistance.

In conclusion, it is clear from my research that these Irish missionaries and development workers have what Sayer (2011) calls a relationship of concern with their fellow human beings and their multifaceted discourses adopt a critical perspective about development which is in contrast to totalising discourses which fostered “a way of conceiving social life as a technical problem, a matter of rational decision and management to be entrusted to development professionals, who devise mechanisms to make societies fit a pre-existing model that embodied the structures and functions of modernity” (Escobar, 1995, p 52).

## Bibliography

---

Ager, A. and Ager, J., 2011. Faith and the discourse of secular humanitarianism. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 24(3), pp.456-472.

Alejandro Leal, P. (2007). Participation: the ascendancy of a buzzword in the neo-liberal era. *Development in practice*, 17(4-5), pp.539-548.

Alkire, S. (2010). Human development: Definitions, critiques, and related concepts. *UNDP-HDRO Occasional Papers*, (2010/1).

Alkire, S. (2005). Why the capability approach? *Journal of Human Development*, 6(1), 115-135.

Alkire, S. (2002). Dimensions of human development. *World Development*, 30(2), 181-205.

Alkire, S. and Black, R. (1997), A Practical Reasoning Theory of Development Ethics: Furthering the Capabilities Approach', *Journal of International Development*, 9(2)

Alkire, S and Deneulin, S, (2009) The human development and capability approach, in Deneulin, S., & Shahani, L. (editors.). (2009). *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach: Freedom and Agency* Earthscan

Alkire, S and Deneulin, S, (2009) A normative framework for development, in Deneulin, S., & Shahani, L. (editors.). (2009). *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach: Freedom and Agency* Earthscan

Andreotti, V., 2006. Theory without practice is idle, practice without theory is blind': the potential contributions of post-colonial theory to development education. *Development Education Journal*, 12(3)

Anheier, H. K., Gerhards, J., & Romo, F. P. (1995). Forms of capital and social structure in cultural fields: Examining Bourdieu's social topography. *American Journal of Sociology*, 859-903.

APSO, *Annual Reports*, Various Years

Apthorpe, R (2011), Epilogue, Who is International Aid? Personal Observations, in Fechter, A. M., & Hindman, H. (eds.), *Inside the Everyday Lives of Development Workers: The Challenges and Futures of Aid Land*. Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press.

Apthorpe, R, (2012) Effective Aid: the poetics of some aid workers' angles on how humanitarian aid 'works', *Third World Quarterly*, 33:8, 1545-1559,

Archer, M.S. (2000). *Being Human, the problem of agency*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Archer, M.S. (2003). *Structure, agency and the internal conversation*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

- Archer, M. S. (Ed.). (2014). *Late modernity: Trajectories towards morphogenic society*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Arndt, H.W, 1987 *Economic Development, the History of an Idea*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago
- Bandyopadhyay, R., 2019. Volunteer tourism and “The White Man’s Burden”: globalization of suffering, white savior complex, religion and modernity. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 27(3), pp.327-343.
- Banks, N., & Hulme, D. (2012). The role of NGOs and civil society in development and poverty reduction. *Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper*, 171.
- Baser, H., & Morgan, P. (2008). *Capacity, change and performance*. European Centre for Development Policy Management.
- Bebington, A. J., Hickey, S., & Mitlin, D. C. (2008). *Can NGOs Make a Difference? The Challenge of Development Alternatives* , London: Zed, 2008.
- Becker, Howard, S, (1998), *Tricks of the Trade*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago
- Becker, Howard, S, (1986), *Writing for Social Scientists*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago
- Beckert, J., & Streeck, W. (2008). *Economic Sociology and Political Economy: A Programmatic Perspective* (No. 08/4). MPIfG working paper.
- Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual review of sociology*, 26(1), 611-639.
- Berg, E. J. (1993). *Rethinking technical cooperation: reforms for capacity building in Africa*. United Nations Development Programme.
- Billett, S. (2007). Including the missing subject: placing the personal within the community in Hughes, J, Jewson, N, Unwin, L (Eds). (2007). *Communities of Practice Critical perspective*, Routledge, London.
- Blagescu, M., & Young, J. (2006). *Capacity building for policy advocacy: Current thinking and approaches among agencies supporting civil society organizations*. London: Overseas Development Institute. Working Paper 260.
- Blackmore, C (Ed.) *Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice*. Springer, London
- Block, F. (2003). Karl Polanyi and the writing of the Great Transformation, *Theory and Society*, 32(3), 275-306.
- Blyth, Mark, (2002), *Great Transformation, Economic ideas and Institutional Change in the 20th century*, Cambridge University Press

- Boff, C & Boff, L, (1985) *Salvation and Liberation, in Search of a Balance between Faith and Politics*, Orbis
- Boff, L and Boff, C., 1987. *Introducing liberation theology*. Orbis Books.
- Bolton, G, (2007) *Aid and Other Dirty Business*, Elbury Press
- Booth, D, (1994) *Rethinking Social Development*, Ohio
- Bosch, D. J. (1991). *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* . Orbis Books.
- Bradbury, S., 2013. Mission, missionaries and development. In *Handbook of Research on Development and Religion*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Brighouse, H., & Robeyns, I. (editors.). (2010). *Measuring Justice: Primary Goods and Capabilities*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brock, M. P. (2010). Resisting the Catholic Church's notion of the nun as self-sacrificing woman. *Feminism & psychology*, 20(4), 473-490.
- Broderick, A. (2018). Equality of what? The capability approach and the right to education for persons with disabilities. *Social Inclusion*, 6(1), 29-39.
- Brown, P, (2008), A Review of the Literature on Case Study Research, *Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education*, Volume 1, Issue 1
- Burawoy, M. (1998). The extended case method. *Sociological Theory*, 16(1), 4-33.
- Burawoy, M et al (2000). *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- Burawoy, M. (2004). Public sociologies: Contradictions, dilemmas, and possibilities. *Social forces*, 82(4), 1603-1618.
- Burnell, Peter, (1997) *Foreign Aid in a Changing world* Open University Press
- Calhoun, Craig (2008) *The imperative to reduce suffering: charity, progress, and emergencies in the field of humanitarian action*. In: Barnett, Michael and Weiss, Thomas G., (eds.) *Humanitarianism in Question: Politics, Power, Ethics*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, USA, pp. 73-97.
- Cannon, B., & King, D. (2005). *Working for a Better World: A Guide to Volunteering in Global Development*. Comhlámh Dublin
- Cannon, B., & Kirby, P. (editors), (2012). *Civil Society and the State in Left-led Latin America: Challenges and Limitations to Democratization*. Zed Books.
- Carr, B & Ellner, S, (1993) *The Latin American Left, from the Fall of Allende to Perestroika* , Westview Press

- Casey, K. (2005). Defining political capital: a reconsideration of Bourdieu's Interconvertibility Theory. *Online: [http://lilt.ilstu.edu/critique/Spring, 202008](http://lilt.ilstu.edu/critique/Spring,202008)* (date accessed June13).
- Chambers R, (1997), *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last*, ITDG Publishing
- Chambers R, (2005), *Ideas for Development*, Earthscan, London
- Chambers R, (2008), *Revolutions in Development Inquiry*, Earthscan, London
- Chromy, J (2008) Snowball Sampling in Lavrakas, P. J. *Encyclopedia of Survey Research Methods: AM* (Vol. 1). Sage.
- Clark, D. A. (2005). *The Capability Approach: Its Development, Critiques and Recent Advances*. GPRG-WPS-032
- Clark, D, A, (2006) *The Elgar Companion to Development Studies*, Edward Elgar Publishing
- Clark, D. A. (2007). *Adaptation, Poverty and Well-Being: Some Issues and Observations with Special Reference to the Capability Approach and Development Studies*. GPRG-WPS-081
- Clark, J, (1991), *Democratizing Development the role of Voluntary Organisations*, Earthscan
- Clarke, G, (2008), Faith-Based organizations and international development: An overview, in
- Clarke, G and Jennings, M eds (2008) *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations, Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*, Palgrave Macmillan
- Clarke, G and Jennings, M eds (2008) *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations, Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*, Palgrave Macmillan
- Clarke, G and Jennings, M, (2008), Introduction, in Clarke, G and Jennings, M eds (2008) *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations, Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*, Palgrave Macmillan
- Clarke, M., & Donnelly, J. (2009). Learning from missionaries: Lessons for secular development practitioners. *Engaging the World*, 169.
- Clarke, M, (2013) Understanding the nexus between religion and development, in Matthew Clarke (ed.), *Handbook of Research on Religion and Development*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar
- Clissett, P. (2008). Evaluating Qualitative Research, *Journal of Orthopaedic Nursing*, 12(2), 99-105.
- Collier, D. (1998). Comparative-Historical Analysis: Where Do We Stand?. *Newsletter of the American Political Science Association Organized Section in Comparative Politics*, 9(2).

- Collier, P, (2008), *The Bottom Billion*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Collins, J., DeZerega, S., & Heckscher, Z. (2002). *How to Live Your Dream of Volunteering Overseas*. Penguin.
- Collins, N, (2009), *The Splendid Cause* , Columba Press, Dublin
- Collins, N, (2017) *A Mad Thing To Do, A century of Columban Missions*, Dalgan Press.
- Comhlámh, (2004), *Working for a Better World, Options for Working in Global Development* Comhlámh
- Comhlámh, (2007), Inside the MDGs-just another acronym? in *Focus Action for Global Justice*, Issue 79
- Comhlámh, (2013), *Models of International Volunteering Trends, Innovation & Good Practice* Comhlámh
- Comaroff, Jean & John, (1991) *Of Revelation and Revolution, Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa* Vol. 1 University of Chicago press,
- Comaroff, J., 2021. The colonization of consciousness. In *Critical Readings in the History of Christian Mission* (pp. 447-468). Brill.
- Concern, *Annual Report*, Various Years
- Concern (2005), *Concern Worldwide Policy Statement*, Concern Dublin
- Cook, N. (2012). Canadian development workers, transnational encounters and cultures of cosmopolitanism. *International Sociology*, 27(1), 3-20.
- Cooke, B. and Kothari, U. eds., 2001. *Participation: The new tyranny?*. Zed books.
- Cooke, C., 1980. The modern Irish missionary movement. *Archivium Hibernicum*, 35, pp.234-246.
- Cornwall, A., & Eade, D. (EDS), (2010). *Deconstructing Development Discourse: Buzzwords and Fuzzwords* , Oxfam GB.
- Cornwall, A (2010), Introductory overview - Buzzwords and Fuzzwords: Deconstructing Development Discourse in Cornwall, A., & Eade, D. (EDS) (2010). *Deconstructing Development Discourse: Buzzwords and Fuzzwords* , Oxfam GB.
- Cornwall, A., & Brock, K. (2005). What do buzzwords do for development policy? A critical look at ‘participation’, ‘empowerment’ and ‘poverty reduction’. *Third world quarterly*, 26(7), 1043-1060.
- Cornwall, A., & Brock, K. (2005). Beyond buzzwords “poverty reduction”, “participation” and “empowerment” in development policy. check

Curran, C. E. (2002). *Catholic social teaching, 1891-present: A historical, theological, and ethical analysis*. Georgetown University Press.

Dail Eireann (2008) *Interim Report on Irish Aid*, Committee of Public Accounts

Dar, S., & Cooke, B. (2008). *The New Development Management: Critiquing the Dual Modernization*. Zed Books.

DCD - OECD (2012) *Information Note on the DAC Peer Review Process* DCD(2012)4

De Jong (2011), False binaries altruism and selfishness in NGO work, in Fechter, A. M., & Hindman, H. (eds.), *Inside the Everyday Lives of Development Workers: The Challenges and Futures of Aidland*. Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press.

Deneulin, S (2002), 'Perfectionism, Liberalism and Paternalism in Sen and Nussbaum's Capability Approach', *Review of Political Economy*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 497-518.

Deneulin, S. (2008). Beyond individual freedom and agency: Structures of living together in Sen's capability approach to development, in: Alkire, S., Comim, F. and Qizilbash, M., (editors.). *The Capability Approach: Concepts, Measures and Application*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Deneulin, S. (2009). Ideas related to human development. in *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach*, in Deneulin, S., & Shahani, L. (editors.). (2009). *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach: Freedom and Agency*, Earthscan

Deneulin, S (2013), Christianity and international development: An overview, in Matthew Clarke (ed.), *Handbook of Research on Religion and Development*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

Deneulin, S. and C. Rakodi (2011), 'Revisiting religion: development studies thirty years on', in *World Development*, 39(1): 45-54.

Deneulin, S and Bano, M (2009) *Religion in Development*, Zed Books, London

Deneulin, S., & Shahani, L. (editors). (2009). *An Introduction to the Human Development and Capability Approach: Freedom and Agency*, Earthscan

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (editors.). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Department of Foreign Affairs, (2002), *Report of the Ireland Aid Review Committee*, Department of Foreign Affairs, Dublin

DFA (2013) *One World, One Future Ireland's Policy for International Development*, Department of Foreign Affairs, Dublin

De Sardan, O. Jean-Pierre (2005) *Anthropology and Development: Understanding Contemporary Social Change*. London: Zed.

- Deutsch, Karl W (1996) The case for a comparative approach in Alex Inkeles and Masamichi Sasaki (editors), *Comparing Nations and Cultures: Readings in a Cross-Disciplinary Perspective*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey
- Dóchas (2004), *A History of Dochas 1974-2004: The First Thirty Years* Dóchas
- Dóchas (2007), *Trends in Irish Aid Expenditure 1995-2005*, Dóchas
- Dóchas (2013) *Attitudes towards Development Cooperation in Ireland* Report of a National Survey of Irish Adults, Dóchas, Dublin.
- Donati, P, Archer, M.S. (2015). *The Relational Subject*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
- Dorr, D. (2000). *Mission in Today's World*, Orbis Books, New York
- Dorr, D. (2012). *Option for the Poor and for the Earth: Catholic Social Teaching*, Orbis Books, New York.
- Dos Santos, T, (1993), The structure of dependence in, Seligson, Mitchell A, & Passet-Smith, J.T (editors.), *Development and Underdevelopment* Lynne Rienner, London
- Eade, D, (1997), *Capacity Building: An Approach to People Centred Development*, Oxfam, GB
- Eade, D, (1999), Editorial, in *Development in Practice*, Volume 9, number 1/2
- Eade, D, (2003), Editorial, in *Development in Practice* Volume 13 number 5
- Eade, D., & Vaux, T. (editors.). (2007). *Development and Humanitarianism: Practical Issues*, Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press.
- Eade, D, (2010) Capacity building: who builds whose capacity? in Cornwall, A., & Eade, D. (EDS) (2010). *Deconstructing Development Discourse: Buzzwords and Fuzzwords*, Oxfam GB.
- Easterly, W, (2006), *The White Man's Burden*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
- Easterly, W, (2013), *The Tyranny of Experts*, Basic Books
- Elliott, C, (1987), *Comfortable Compassion, Poverty, Power and the Church*, Hodder & Stoughton
- Emblen, V, (1995) Who is the expert? in *Development in Practice*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 232-23, Taylor & Francis, Ltd.
- Escobar, A, (1995), *Encountering Development*, Princeton University Press, Princeton
- Escobar, A, (2012), *Encountering Development*, Princeton University Press, Princeton
- Evans, P. 2002. Collective capabilities, culture, and Amartya Sen's development as freedom, *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 37(2), 54-60.



- Eze, C., Lindegger, C.G. and Rakoczy, S., 2013. Is the Catholic Church a safe space for religious sisters? Charting the African terrain using three case studies. *Scriptura: Journal for Contextual Hermeneutics in Southern Africa*, 112(1), pp.1-15.
- Eyben, R, 2006 *Relationships for Aid*, London: Earthscan, 2006, pp 45–46.
- Fagan, G H, Munck, R, and Nadasen, K 1997. Gender, culture and development, a South African experience in *Cultural Perspectives on Development*, Vincent Tucker (editor) Frank Cass
- Fahey, T., 1992. Catholicism and industrial society in Ireland. *The development of industrial society in Ireland*, pp.241-263
- Fahey T., 1998. ‘The Catholic Church and social policy in *Social Policy in Ireland. Principles, Practice and Problems*, Oak Tree Press, Dublin
- Farmer, T., 2002. *Believing in Action: Concern 1968-1998* A&A Farmer
- Farnsworth, V., Kleanthous, I. and Wenger-Trayner, E., 2016. Communities of practice as a social theory of learning: A conversation with Etienne Wenger. *British journal of educational studies*, 64(2), pp.139-160.
- Feagin, J. R., Orum, A. M., & Sjoberg, G. (editors.). 1991. *A Case for the Case Study*. UNC Press Books.
- Fechter, A. M. 2012a. The personal and the professional: Aid workers' relationships and values in the development process, *Third World Quarterly*, 33(8), 1387-1404.
- Fechter, A. M. 2012b. Living well while ‘Doing Good’? (Missing) debates on altruism and professionalism in aid work, in *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 8, 2012, pp 1475–1491
- Fechter, A, M 2016 Aid Work as Moral Labour. *Critique of Anthropology*, 36 (3). 228-243.
- Fechter, A. M., & Hindman, H. (editors.). 2011. *Inside the Everyday Lives of Development Workers: The Challenges and Futures of Aidland*, Sterling, VA: Kumarian Press.
- Ferguson, James, 1990, *The Anti-Politics Machine*, University of Minnesota Press
- Ferguson, J. 1999. *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*, University of California Press.
- Ferguson, J. 2006. *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*, Duke University Press.
- Fine, B, Lapavitsas, C and Pincus J (editors.) 2001, *Development Policy in the Twenty-First Century Beyond the Post-Washington Consensus*.

Fine, B. (2001). Neither the Washington nor the post-Washington Consensus, in. *Development Policy in the Twenty-first Century: Beyond the post-Washington Consensus*.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2006), Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research, *Qualitative Inquiry*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 219-245.

Fowler, A. (1997). *Striking a Balance*. London: Earthscan.

Fowler, A., & Ubels, J. (2010), The multi-faceted nature of capacity: two leading frameworks .in Ubels, J., Acquaye-Baddoo, N. A., & Fowler, A. (editors.). *Capacity Development in Practice*. Earthscan.

Frediani, A. A. (2015). Participatory capabilities in development practice. *The capability approach in development planning and urban design*, 121-133.

Freire, P. (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Penguin, England

Fukuda-Parr, S., & Kumar, A. K. (2009). *Handbook of Human Development: Concepts, Measures, and Policies*. Oxford University Press.

Fukuda-Parr, S., & Kumar, A. S. (2003). *Readings in Human Development*, New Delhi.

Gallego, F.A. and Woodberry, R., 2010. Christian missionaries and education in former African colonies: How competition mattered. *Journal of African Economies*, 19(3), pp.294-329.

Gaspar, D. (1997). Sen's capability approach and Nussbaum's capabilities ethic, *Journal of International Development*, 9(2), 281-302.

Gaspar, D. (2007) Human rights, human needs, human development, human security: relationships between four international 'human discourses. In *Forum for Development Studies* (Vol. 34, No. 1, pp. 9-43). Taylor & Francis Group.

Gaspar, D. (2008). Denis Goulet and the project of development ethics: Choices in methodology, focus and organization, *Journal of Human Development*, 9(3), 453-474.

Gaspar, D., & Apthorpe, R. (1996). Introduction: Discourse analysis and policy discourse.

Gelber, G. ed., 1992. *Poverty and power: Latin America after 500 years*. Cafod.

George, A. L., & Bennett, A. (2004). *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*., Mit Press.

George, Susan, (1986), *How the Other Half Dies*, Penguin

Giger, M., & Kaufmann, M. (2007). *Innovative Capacity Development Approaches for the ERA-ARD Project*.

Gillies and Alvarado, (2012), *Country Systems Strengthening: Beyond Human and Organizational Capacity Development*, VITRUVIAN CONSULTING

Go, J., 2013. For a postcolonial sociology. *Theory and Society*, 42(1), pp.25-55.

Goal, *Annual Report*, Various Years

Goldman, M, (2005), *Imperial Nature, the World Bank and Struggles for Social Justice in the Age of Globalisation*, Yale University Press, New Haven

Goldthorpe, J.H. and Whelan, C.T., 1992. The development of industrial society in Ireland.

Gorman R, F, (1984), PVO'S and development through basic human needs in *Private Voluntary Organisations as Agents of Development*, Robert F Gorman (editor), Westview Press, Boulder

Goudge, P. (2003). *The Whiteness of Power: Racism in Third World Development and Aid.*, Lawrence & Wishart.

Gough, I., & McGregor, J. A. (editors.), (2007). *Wellbeing in Developing Countries: From Theory to Research*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge

Goulet, D. (1971). *Cruel Choice*, Atheneum, New York,

Goulet, D, (1980), Development experts: The one-eyed giants, in *World Development*, Vol. 8, pp. 481-489, Pergamon Press Ltd.

Goulet, D. (1997). Development ethics: a new discipline *International Journal of Social Economics*, 24(11), 1160-1171.

Goulet, D. (2006). *Development Ethics at Work: Explorations—1960-2002*. Routledge.

Gready, P., & Ensor, J. (editors.). (2005). *Reinventing Development?: Translating Rights-based Approaches from Theory into Practice*. Zed Books.

Green, D. (2008). *From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States Can Change the World*, Oxfam.

Green, D. (2012). *From Poverty to Power: How Active Citizens and Effective States Can Change the World*, (2nd Ed). Oxfam.

Greig, A., Hulme, D., & Turner, M. (2007). *Challenging Global Inequality: Development Theory and Practice in the 21st century*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Grenfell, M, (editor), (2008), *Pierre Bourdieu, Key Concepts*, Acumen Publishing, Durham

Grosfoguel, R., 2007. The epistemic turn. Beyond political-economy paradigms. *Cultural Studies*, 21(2-3), pp.211-223.

Gutierrez, G, (1983), *We Drink from Our Own Wells, the Spiritual Journey of a People*, SCM Press

Gutiérrez, G. and Muller, C.G.L., 2015. *On the side of the poor: The theology of liberation*. Orbis Books.

- Hailey, J, (2000), Indicators of identity: NGOs and the strategic imperative of assessing core values, *Development in Practice* Vol 10 numbers 3 &4
- Hanan, R, *Bringing it All Back Home, A History of Comhlámh First 21 Years of Global Solidarity 1975-1996, Comhlámh*, Dublin
- Hancock, G, (1989), *Lords of Poverty*, Mandarin, London
- Hargreaves, J.D., 2014. *Decolonization in Africa*. Routledge.
- Harvey, D. (2005). *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.
- Haustein, J. and Tomalin, E., 2017. Religion and development in Africa and Asia. In *Routledge handbook of Africa–Asia relations* (pp. 76-93). Routledge.
- Haustein, J., 2021. Development as a form of religious engineering? Religion and secularity in development discourse. *Religion*, 51(1), pp.19-39.
- Henn, S., Larreguy, H. and Schmidt-Padilla, C., 2021. Missionary Activity, Education, and Long-run Political Development: Evidence from Africa. *Unpublished manuscript, Harvard University*.
- Henriod P, S.J and Holland Joe, (1986), *Social Analysis, Linking Faith and Justice*, Orbis, Washington
- Hettne, B. (2008). *Sustainable Development in a Globalized World: Studies in Development, Security and Culture* (Vol. 1). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hillforts, Dorothea, (2003), *The Real World of NGOs*, Zed Books
- Holmes M, Rees N, Whelan B ((editors.), (1993), *The Poor Relation: Irish Foreign Policy and the Third World*, Trocar
- Holland, D., & Lave, J. (2019). Social practice theory and the historical production of persons. In *Cultural-Historical Approaches to Studying Learning and Development* (pp. 235-248). Springer, Singapore.
- Hoogvelt, A. M., & Hoogvelt, A. M. (1982). *The Third World in Global Development*. London: Macmillan.
- Horton, D. (2003). *Evaluating Capacity Development: Experiences from Research and Development Organizations Around the World*, IDRC.
- Hughes, J, Jewson, N, Unwin, L (Eds). (2007). *Communities of Practice Critical perspective*, Routledge, London.
- Helmed, & Edwards, E (editors.), (1997), *NGOs, States and Donors* St Martin's Press, New York

- Hirono, M., 2008. Introduction: Christian “Civilizing Missions” of the Past and Present. In *Civilizing Missions* (pp. 1-18). Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Hornsby-Smith, M.P., 1992. Social and religious transformations in Ireland: a case of secularisation?. In *Proceedings of the British Academy* (Vol. 19, pp. 265-290).
- Hornsby-Smith, M.P. and Whelan, C.T., 1994. Religious and moral values. *Values and social change in Ireland*, pp.7-44.
- Humphreys, J, (2010), *God’s Entrepreneurs: How Irish Missionaries Tried to Change the World*, New Island, Dublin
- Ibrahim, S. and Alkire, S., 2007. Agency and empowerment: A proposal for internationally comparable indicators. *Oxford development studies*, 35(4), pp.379-403.
- Ireland Aid, (2001), *Ireland’s Official Development Assistance 2000*, Ireland Aid  
 Irish Aid (2006), *White Paper on Irish Aid*. Irish Aid, Dublin.
- Irish Aid (2011), *Irish Aid Annual Report: Accounting to People, Accounting for Aid*, Irish Aid, Dublin
- Irish Aid (2011a), *Civil Society Section Programme Funding 2012 - 2015 Overview Document*, Irish Aid, Dublin
- Jackson, J, (2005), *Globalizers, Development Workers in Action*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore
- Jenkins, Richard, (1992), *Pierre Bourdieu*, Routledge.
- Jessop, B. (2002). Liberalism, neoliberalism, and urban governance: A state–theoretical perspective. *Antipode*, 34(3), 452-472.
- Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment, *Development and Change*, 30(3), 435-464.
- Kaplan, A, (1996), *The Development Practitioner’s Handbook*, Pluto Press
- Kapoor, Ilana, (2002), Capitalism, Culture, agency dependency versus postcolonial theory *Third World Quarterly* Vol 23 No 4 pp 647-664 Carfax
- Keck, M. E., & Skink, K. (1998). *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Vol. 35). Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Kelly, M, J, (2008), *Education: For an Africa without Aids*, Paulines, Nairobi
- Kenny, K, (2008), Arrive bearing gifts... post-colonial insights for development management in Dar, S., & Cooke, B. (2008). *The New Development Management: Critiquing the Dual Modernization*. Zed Books.
- Khalaf-Elledge, N., 2021. *The Religion–Gender Nexus in Development: Policy and Practice Considerations*. Routledge.

- Kilcullen, J (2010) Introduction in Maye, B, *The Search for Justice – Trócaire: A History*, Veritas, Dublin.
- King, K & McGrath S, (2004), *Knowledge for Development*, Zed books
- Kirk, J.A, (2002), *What is Mission? Theological Explorations*, Darton, Longmann, Todd
- Kohn, Melvin L (1996) Cross-national research as an analytic strategy in Alex Inkeles and Masamichi Sasaki (editors) *Comparing Nations and Cultures: Readings in a Cross-Disciplinary Perspective*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey
- Korten, D, C, (1990), *Getting to the 21st Century Voluntary: Action and the Global Agenda*, Kumarian press
- Kothari, U. (editor). (2005). *A Radical History of Development Studies: Individuals, Institutions and Ideologies*, David Philip.
- Kothari, U, (2005) Authority and Expertise: The Professionalization of International Development and the Ordering of Dissent, *Antipode*, 37 (3) 425-446
- Labonte, R., & Laverack, G. (2001). Capacity building in health promotion, Part 1: For whom? And for what purpose? , *Critical Public Health*, 11(2), 111-127.
- Lancaster, C, (2007), *Foreign Aid, Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Leen, M. (1995). Irish and EU development cooperation policies: Priorities for Ireland's presidency. *Tricaine Development Review* 1995, 83-89.
- Leen, M, (2003), Perspectives on Aid: benefits, deficits and strategies in McCann & McCloskey S (editors), *From the Local to the Global Key Issues in Development*, Pluto Press
- Lewis, D & Kanji, N, (2009), *Non-Governmental Organisations and Development*, Routledge, New York.
- Lewis, D and Mosse, D, (2006) *Development Brokers and Translators, The Ethnography of aid and agencies*, Kumarian Press, USA
- Lewis, S, (2005), *Race against Time, Searching for Hope in AIDS' Ravaged Africa*, Anansi
- Leys, C. (1996). *The Rise & Fall of Development Theory* Indiana University Press.
- Levine D, (1980), *Churches and Politics in Latin America*, Sage
- Linden, I, (2008) The language of development: What are development agencies talking about in Clarke, G and Jennings, M eds (2008) *Development, Civil Society and Faith-Based Organizations, Bridging the Sacred and the Secular*, Palgrave Macmillan

- Link Community Development, (2006), *Ireland Annual Review 2006*
- Long, N, (2001), *Development Sociology, Actor Perspectives* Routledge
- Long N, & Villareal, M, (1993), *Exploring Development Interfaces: From Transfer of Knowledge to the Transformation of Meaning in Beyond the Impasse*, Zed Books
- Lunn, J., 2009. The role of religion, spirituality and faith in development: A critical theory approach. *Third World Quarterly*, 30(5), pp.937-951.
- Lynch, I, C, (2006), *Beyond Faith and adventure, Irish Missionaries in Nigeria*, ICDL
- Maathai, W., 2009. *The challenge for Africa: A new vision*. Random House.
- McCann G & McCloskey Stephen (editors.), (2003), *From the Local to the Global, Key Issues in Development*, Pluto, London,
- McCarthy, T, (1995), *Ideals and Illusions on Reconstruction and Deconstruction in Contemporary Critical Theory*, MIT Press
- Mac Curtain, M, (2006) Preface in *Made Holy: Irish Women Religious at Home and Abroad*. McKenna, Y. Irish Academic Press.
- McEwan, C., 2019. *Postcolonialism, decoloniality and development*. Routledge.
- McGovern, A.F., 2009. *Liberation theology and its critics: Toward an assessment*. Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- McKenna, Y. (2006). *Made Holy: Irish Women Religious at Home and Abroad*. Irish Academic Press.
- McMichael, Philip, (1996), *Development and Social Change*, Pine Forge Press
- Mangold, K, (2012) 'Struggling to Do the Right Thing': challenges during international volunteering, *Third World Quarterly*, 33:8, 1493-1509,
- Marangos, J. (2009). What happened to the Washington Consensus? The evolution of international development policy. *The Journal of Socio-economics*, 38(1), 197-208.
- Martinussen, J D & Pedersen, P E, (2003), *Aid: Understanding International Development Cooperation*, Zed Books
- Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. Sage.
- Maton, K. (2005). A question of autonomy: Bourdieu's field approach and higher education policy. *Journal of Education Policy*, 20(6), 687-704.
- Maton, K. (2008). Habitus. in Grenfell, M (editor), 2008, *Pierre Bourdieu, Key Concepts*, 49-65.
- Maye, B (2010) *The Search for Justice – Trócaire: A History*, Veritas, Dublin.

- Maurizio, R. (2012). *Labour informality in Latin America: the case of Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Peru*. Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper, (165).
- Mee, T, (2005), *Church Alive! A Pilgrimage from Africa to Brazil*, DUDU NSOMBA Publications, Glasgow
- Meehan, F (2013) The Irish State, Development Assistance, and the Missionary Sector Paper presented at Conference on Mission Today & Tomorrow, All Hallows College, Dublin, 5-6 June, 2013
- Meredith, M., 2006. The state of Africa: A history of fifty years of independence. Simon & Schuster UK.
- Merriam, S. B. (2002). *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis*. Jossey-Bass Inc Pub.
- Mintzberg, H., & Azevedo, G. (2012). Fostering Why not? social initiatives—beyond business and governments. *Development in Practice*, 22(7), 895-908.
- Misean Cara, Annual reports various years
- Misean Cara, (2018) The Missionary Approach to Development Interventions
- Montero, P., 2012. The contribution of post-colonial critique to an anthropology of missions. *Religion and Society*, 3(1), pp.115-129.
- Morgan, P. (2002). Technical assistance: correcting the precedents. *Development Policy Journal*, 2(1), 1-22.
- Mosse, D. (2005). *Cultivating Development: An Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice* (Anthropology, Culture and Society Series).
- Mosse, D. (Ed) (2011). *Adventures in Aidland: The Anthropology of Professionals in International Development*, Berghahan books
- Mosse, D. (2011). Introduction in *Adventures in Aidland* in *Adventures in Aidland: The Anthropology of Professionals in International Development*, Berghahan books
- Morony, J, (1997), Irish development policy and Africa, DSA European Development Policy Study Group Discussion Paper No. 5, January 1997
- Moyo, D, (2009) *Dead Aid*, Penguin Books, England
- Murphy, R (2012) *Inside Irish Aid, The Impulse to Help*, The Liffey Press, Dublin
- Ndlovu-Gatsheni, S.J., 2014. Eurocentrism, coloniality and the myths of decolonisation of Africa. *The Thinker Q*, 1, pp.39-42.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach*, Cambridge University Press.



Nussbaum, M. (2003). Capabilities as fundamental entitlements: Sen and social justice. *Feminist Economics*, 9(2-3), 33-59.

Nussbaum, M. (2006). *Frontiers of Justice. Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*, The Belknap press, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Nussbaum, M. C. (2011). *Creating Capabilities*. Harvard University Press.

OECD (1999), *Development Co-operation Reviews: Ireland 1999*, OECD Publishing. doi: 10.1787/9789264173330-en

OECD (2003), *Development Co-operation Reviews: Ireland 2003*, OECD Publishing.

OECD (2009), *Development Co-operation Reviews: Ireland 2009*, OECD Publishing.

OECD (2010) *Inside the DAC: How the DAC works* OECD

O'Keefe, C. (2008), *Linking between Ireland and the South: A Review and Guidelines for Good Practice*, Irish Aid

Oliver, P. E., & Johnston, H. (2005). What a good idea! Ideologies and frames in social movement research. *Frames of protest: Social movements and the framing perspective*, 185-204.

Ó Murchú, P, SSC, (2014), *Mission in An Era of Change, The Columbans 1963 -2014*, Red Hen Publishing, Dingle

Onatu, G. O. (2013). Building theory from case study research: the unanswered question in social sciences? In *Proceedings in GVW-the 1st Global Virtual Conference-Workshop* (No. 1).

O'Neill, H. B. (1982). *Irish Aid: Performance and policies*. UCD Centre for Economic Research Policy Paper Series; No. 3

O'Neill, H. (1994). Ireland's foreign aid in 1993. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*,

O'Neill, H. (1995). Ireland's foreign aid in 1994. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*,

O'Neill, H. (1996). Ireland's foreign aid in 1995. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*,

O'Neill, H. (1997). Ireland's foreign aid in 1996. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*,

O'Neill, H. (1998). Ireland's Foreign Aid in 1997. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*,

O'Neill, Helen (1999): Ireland's Foreign Aid in 1998, *Irish Studies in International Affairs*

O'Neill, H. (2000). Ireland's Foreign Aid in 1999, *Irish Studies in International Affairs*,

O'Neill, H. (2001). Ireland's Foreign Aid in 2000, *Irish Studies in International Affairs*,

- O'Neill, H. (2002). Ireland's foreign aid in 2001. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 13(1)
- O'Neill, H. (2003). Ireland's foreign aid in 2002. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 14(1)
- O'Neill, H. (2004). Ireland's foreign aid in 2003. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 15(1)
- O'Neill, H. (2005). Ireland's foreign Aid in 2004. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 16(1)
- O'Neill, H. (2007). Ireland's foreign aid in 2006. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 18(1)
- O'Neill, H. (2009). Ireland's foreign aid in 2008. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 20(1).
- O'Neill, H. (2011). Ireland's foreign aid in 2010. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 22(1).
- O'Sullivan, K. (2011). History and the development aid debate in the Republic of Ireland, policy & practice, *Development Education Review*, (12).
- O'Sullivan, K. (2017). Humanitarian Encounters: Biafra, NGOs and Imaginings of the Third World in Britain and Ireland, 1967–1970. In *Postcolonial Conflict and the Question of Genocide* (pp. 259-277). Routledge.
- Parr, S F and A.K Shiva Kumar (2003), *Readings in Human Development*, Oxford University Press
- Pearce, J, 1992, A short history of Latin America in *Poverty and power: Latin America after 500 years*. Gelber, G. ed., Cafod.
- Pieterse, J. N. (2001). *Development Theory: Deconstructions/Reconstructions*, Sage.
- Pieterse, J. N. (2010). *Development Theory*. (2nd edition) Sage.
- Pogge, T. (2010). A critique of the capability approach. in Brighouse, H., & Robeyns, I. (editors). *Measuring Justice: Primary Goods and Capabilities*. Cambridge University Press *Measuring Justice*, 17-60.
- Portes, A. (1997). Neoliberalism and the sociology of development: emerging trends and unanticipated facts, *Population and Development Review*,
- Portes, A. (2000, March). The two meanings of social capital. In *Sociological Forum* (Vol. 15, No. 1, pp. 1-12). Kluwer Academic Publishers-Plenum Publishers.
- Powell, M, (1995), Culture: Intervention or solidarity? in *Development in Practice*, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 196-206, Taylor & Francis, Ltd.

- Power, G., Maury, M., & Maury, S. (2002). Operationalising bottom-up learning in international NGOs: barriers and alternatives, *Development in Practice*, 12(3-4), 272-284
- Qizilbash, Mozaffar (1996) Capabilities, well-being and human development: A survey. *The Journal of Development Studies* 33.2.
- Ragin, C. C. (1987) *The Comparative Method: Moving Beyond Qualitative and Quantitative Strategies*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Ragin, C. C. (1997) Turning the tables: how case-oriented research challenges variable-oriented research, in *Comparative Social Research*, Volume 16, 1997.
- Rahnema, M., & Bawtree, V. (1997). *The Post-Development Reader*. Zed Books.
- Ranis, G., Stewart, F., & Ramirez, A. (2000). Economic growth and human development. *World Development*, 28(2), 197-219.
- Rapley, J. (2007). *Understanding Development: Theory and Practice in the Third World*, Lynne Rienner, London
- Ray, L. (2007). *Globalization and Everyday Life*. Routledge.
- Reader, J., 1998. *Africa: A biography of the continent*. Penguin UK.
- Remenyi, Joe, (1998), An Appropriate role for NGOs in development, Centre for Development Studies, UCD, Vol 1 Dept Research Briefings
- Riddell, R. C. (2007). *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?* Oxford University Press.
- Rist, Gilbert, (2008), *The History of Development, From Western Origins to Global Faith*, Zed Books, London
- Robert, D, L (2009), *Christian Mission, How Christianity Became a World Religion* Willey-Blackwell,
- Roberts, J (2006), Limits to Communities of practice in the *Journal of Management Studies* 43:3
- Robeyns, I. (2003), *The capability approach: an interdisciplinary introduction*. In Training course preceding the Third International Conference on the Capability Approach, Pavia, Italy.
- Robeyns, I. (2006). The capability approach in practice. *Journal of political philosophy*, 14(3), 351-376.
- Robeyns, I. (2009). Capability approach. *Handbook of Economics and Ethics*, Vol 39.
- Robeyns, I., (2016). Capabilitarianism. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 17(3), pp.397-414.
- Robeyns, I., (2017). *Wellbeing, freedom and social justice: The capability approach re-examined*. Open Book Publishers.

- Robson, Colin (2002) *Real World Research: A Resource for Social Scientists and Practitioner-Researchers*, (second edition), Blackwell
- Rodgers, Paula, (1996), *The Charity box speaks back Profile of an Irish aid agency*, The Sociological Association of Ireland
- Rodrik, D. (2002). Feasible Globalizations (No. w9129). National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Roth, S, (2012) Professionalisation Trends and Inequality: experiences and practices in aid relationships, *Third World Quarterly*, 33:8, 1459-1474,
- Roth, S. (2015). *The Paradoxes of Aid work*, Routledge, London
- Roth, S., 2019. Linguistic capital and inequality in aid relations. *Sociological Research Online*, 24(1), pp.38-54.
- Roxborough, I., 1980. *Theories of underdevelopment*. Macmillan International Higher Education.
- Rutazibwa, O.U., 2018. On babies and bathwater: Decolonizing international development studies 1. In *Decolonization and feminisms in global teaching and learning* (pp. 158-180). Routledge.
- Sachs, Jeffrey, (2005), *The End of Poverty*, Penguin
- Sachs, Wolfgang (editor), (1992), *The Development Dictionary, A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, Zed Books, London
- Said, E, 2002, Orientalism, in *Development: a cultural studies reader* Schech, S. and Haggis, J. eds. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Samson, J., 2021. The problem of colonialism in the western historiography of Christian missions. In *Critical Readings in the History of Christian Mission* (pp. 511-530). Brill.
- Sayer, A. (2005). *The Moral Significance of Class*. Cambridge University Press.
- Sayer, A, (2010), *Method in Social Science, a Realist Approach*, Routledge, London
- Sayer, A. (2011). *Why Things Matter to People: Social Science, Values and Ethical Life*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schoch, S, & Haggis J, (editors), (2002), *Development: A Cultural Studies Reader*, Blackwell
- Schultheis, (1988), *Our Best Kept Secret: Catholic Social Teaching*
- Schuurman, F, J (editor), 1993, *Beyond the Impasse, New directions in Development Theory*, Zed Books, London
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Oxford University Press.

- Sen, A. K. (2009). *The Idea of Justice*. Harvard University Press.
- Sherraden, M. S., Stringham, J., Sow, S. C. & McBride, A. M. (2006), The forms and structure of international voluntary service in *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 17, 163-180
- Singer, P. (1972). Famine, affluence, and morality. *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 229-243.
- Siisiainen, M. (2000). Two concepts of social capital: Bourdieu vs. Putnam . Paper presented at ISTR Fourth International Conference The Third Sector: For What and for Whom? Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland
- Shusterman, R. (1999), *Bourdieu: A Critical Reader*, Blackwell
- Sklair Leslie, (1991), *Sociology of the Global System*, Prentice Hall, London
- Slim H. and Thompson P. (1993) *Listening for a Change: Oral Testimony and Development*, Panos, London.
- Smelser, N. J., & Swedberg, R. (2005), *The Handbook of Economic Sociology*, Princeton University Press
- Smillie, I. (1995), *The Alms Bazaar*, It Publications
- Smillie, I. (1996), Irish development NGOs and Government. An OECD Case Study, in the *Trócaire Development Review*. Trócaire, Dublin
- Smillie, I. (1997). NGOs and development assistance: a change in mind-set? *Third World Quarterly*, 18(3), 563-578.
- Smirl, L. (2015), *Spaces of aid, how cars, compounds and hotels shape humanitarianism*, Zed books, London.
- Smith, J.D., 2017. Positioning missionaries in development studies, policy, and practice. *World Development*, 90, pp.63-76.
- Snow, D. A., & Benford, R. D. (1992). Master frames and cycles of protest. In *Frontiers in Social Movement Theory*, ed. Aldon D. Morris and Carol McClurg Mueller.
- Spies, E. and Schrode, P., 2021. Religious engineering: exploring projects of transformation from a relational perspective. *Religion*, 51(1), pp.1-18.
- Srinivasan, T.N, (1977), Development, poverty, and basic human needs: Some issues. *Food Research Institute Studies*, 16 (no. 2) (1977), pp. 11–28.
- Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. K. Denzin, & Y.S. Lincoln (editors.). *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd ed., pp. 443-466). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Stern, N., Dethier, J. J., & Rogers, F. H. (2006). *Growth and Empowerment: Making Development Happen*. MIT Press Books.

Stewart, F. (1989). Basic needs strategies, human rights, and the right to development. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 347-374.

Stiglitz, J. E. (2002). *Globalization and Discontents*. Allen Lane/Penguin Books, UK.

Stiglitz, J. E., Sen, A., & Fitoussi, J. P. (2009). Report by the commission on the measurement of economic performance and social progress, Paris: Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress.

Storey Andy, (2003), 'Measuring development: the cruel choice' in McCann G & McCloskey Stephen (editors.). *From the Local to the Global, Key Issues in Development*, Pluto, London,

Streeten, P., & Burki, S. J. (1978). Basic needs: some issues. *World Development*, 6(3), 411-421.

Sultana, F., 2019. Decolonizing development education and the pursuit of social justice. *Human Geography*, 12(3), pp.31-46.

Sutton, M. (1985), Irish ODA and the UN target, *in the Trócaire Development Review*, Trócaire

Swartz, D. (1996). Bridging the study of culture and religion: Pierre Bourdieu's political economy of symbolic power. *Sociology of Religion*, 57(1), 71-85.

Swartz, D. (1997) *Culture & Power, The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*, The University of Chicago Press.

Swedberg, R. (1997). New economic sociology: What has been accomplished, what is ahead? *Acta Sociologica*, 40(2), 161-182.

Swidler, A, (2009), 'Teach a man to fish': The doctrine of sustainability and its effects on three strata of Malawian society, in *World Development*, Volume 37, Number 7pps: 1182–1196

Swidler, A, (2013), African affirmations: The religion of modernity and the modernity of religion in *International Sociology*, Volume 28, number, 6 pps 680–696, Sage

Taithe, B., 2012. Pyrrhic victories? French Catholic missionaries, modern expertise, and secularizing technologies. *Sacred aid: Faith*

Thomas, A. (2000). Development as practice in a liberal capitalist world, *Journal of International Development*, 12(6), 773-787.

Tomalin, E (2013), *Religion and Development*, Routledge, New York

Tomalin, E. ed., 2015. *The Routledge handbook of religions and global development* (pp. 1-14). London: Routledge.

Tomalin, E., 2018. Religions, poverty reduction and global development institutions. *Palgrave Communications*, 4(1), pp.1-12.

Tomalin, E., 2020. Global aid and faith actors: the case for an actor-orientated approach to the 'turn to religion'. *International Affairs*, 96(2), pp.323-342.

Tomalin, E., 2021. Religions and development: a paradigm shift or business as usual?. *Religion*, 51(1), pp.105-124.

Torbinorn, I, (1982), *Living Abroad, Personal Adjustment and Personnel Policy in the Overseas Setting*, Wiley, Chichester.

Trócaire, *Annual Report*, Various Years

Trommlerova, K, F, Klasen, S, Lebmann, O (2015) Determinants of Empowerment in a Capability-Based Poverty Approach: Evidence from The Gambia in *World Development* Volume 66 pps 1-15

Tucker, V, (1997), (editor), *Cultural Perspectives on Development*, Frank Cass

Tucker, V, (1997a), Health, Medicine and development: a field of cultural struggle in Vincent Tucker (editor), *Cultural Perspectives on Development*, Frank Cass

Tucker, V, (1997b), Introduction: a cultural perspective on development in Vincent Tucker (editor), *Cultural Perspectives on Development*, Frank Cass

Tvedt, T, (1998) *Angels of Mercy or Development Diplomats? NGOs & Foreign Aid, Africa* World Press, England

Twaddle, M & Hansen, B (editors.), (2002), *Christian Missionaries & the State in the Third World*, Oxford University Press

Tyndale, W, (2000), Faith and economics in 'development': A bridge across the chasm? in *Development in Practice*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (Feb., 2000), pp. 9-18, Taylor & Francis, Ltd.

Ubels, J., Acquaye-Baddoo, N. A., & Fowler, A. (editors.). (2010). *Capacity Development in Practice*. Earthscan.

United Nations. Development Programme (1990) *Human Development Report 1990*, Oxford University Press.

United Nations. Development Programme. (2000). *Human Development Report 2000: Human Rights and Human Development*. Oxford University Press.

United Nations. Development Programme. (2005). *Human Development Report 2005: International Cooperation at a Crossroads UNDP*

United Nations. Development Programme. (2008), *Capacity Development Practice Note* UNDP, New York

Vallely, P. (2013). *Pope Francis: Untying the Knots*. A&C Black.

- Van de Bor, W, (editor) (1983), *The Art of Beginning*, Pudoc Wageningen
- Vaux, T. (2001). *The Selfish Altruist: Relief Work in Famine and War*. Earthscan.
- Ver Beek, K, A, (2000), Spirituality: A development taboo in *Development in Practice*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 31-43, Taylor & Francis, Ltd
- Viterna, J &Robertson, C, (2015), New Directions for the Sociology of Development in the *Annual Review of Sociology*, 41:243-69
- Vosesa, (2013), Models of international volunteering, Trends, innovation & good practice. Comhlámh
- VSO (2011) VSO Ireland - Strategy 2011-2016, VSO, Dublin
- Wacquant, L. J. (1989). A workshop with Pierre Bourdieu. *Sociological Theory*, 7(1), 26-63.
- Wacquant, L. J. (2008) Pierre Bourdieu in R stones *Key Contemporary Thinkers*. London, Macmillan Check
- Walby, S, (2009), *Globalization & Inequalities*, Sage, London
- Waldron, L, (2013), *A Dawn Unforeseen, Journey from the West of Ireland to the Barrios of Peru*, Liffey Press,
- Wallerstein, I., 1979. *The capitalist world-economy*. Cambridge University Press.
- Wallerstein, I., 1984. *The politics of the world-economy: The states, the movements and the civilizations*. Cambridge University Press.
- Walsh, C., 2010. Development as Buen Vivir: Institutional arrangements and (de) colonial entanglements. *Development*, 53(1), pp.15-21.
- Walton, John (1992) Making the theoretical case, in Ragin, C.C. and Becker, H.S. (editors), *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,
- Warde, A. (2004). *Practice and Field: Revising Bourdieusian Concepts*. Centre for Research on Innovation & Competition, The University of Manchester.
- Watkin S, S. C., & Swidler, A. (2013). Working Misunderstandings: Donors, Brokers, and Villagers in Africa's AIDS Industry. *Population and Development review*, 38(s1), 197-218.
- Weafer, J.A, 2014. *Thirty Three Good Men, celibacy, obedience and identity*. The Columba Press, Dublin
- Wenger, E. 1998. *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge University Press.



- Wenger E. 2010. Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems: The Career of a Concept. In: Blackmore C. (eds) *Social Learning Systems and Communities of Practice*. Springer, London
- Wenger, E, McDermott, R, & Snyder, W 2002. *Cultivating communities of practice: a guide to managing knowledge*. Harvard Business School Press.
- Wenger-Trayner, E, Fenton-O'Creevy, M, Hutchinson, S, Kubiak, C, Wenger-Trayner, B. 2015. *Learning in Landscapes of Practice*, Routledge, London.
- Wenger-Trayner, E., & Wenger-Trayner, B. 2014. Learning in a landscape of practice: A framework. In *Learning in landscapes of practice* (pp. 13-29). Routledge.
- White, T.J., 2010. The impact of British colonialism on Irish Catholicism and national identity: Repression, reemergence, and divergence. *Études irlandaises*, (35-1), pp.21-37.
- Williams, G. 2004. Evaluating Participatory Development: tyranny, power and (re)politicisation *Third World Quarterly* 25(3), 557-579.
- Williamson, J. 2004. The Washington Consensus as policy prescription for development. *Development Challenges in the 1990s: Leading Policymakers Speak from Experience*, 31-33.
- Willis, K. 2011. *Theories and Practices of Development*. Taylor & Francis.
- Woodward, K. 2008. Hanging out and hanging about: Insider/outsider research in the sport of boxing. *Ethnography*, 9(4), 536-560.
- Yin, R. K. (editor.). 2005. *Introducing the World of Education: A Case Study Reader*. Sage.
- Yin, R. K. 2005. Introduction. In R. K. Yin (editor.), *Introducing the World of Education: A Case Study Reader* (pp. x)
- Young, R.J., 2020. *Postcolonialism: A very short introduction*. Oxford University Press.
- Ziai, A. 2016. Development discourse and global history: From colonialism to the sustainable development goals (p. 252).