

Chapter 10

John Wimber's European Impact

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John Wimber – a Californian musician, pastor, evangelist, and church planter, born in rural Missouri – pioneered the rapid global expansion of the charismatic Vineyard network throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Best known for his emphasis on ‘signs and wonders’ as a tool for church growth, he was a leading proponent of the so-called ‘Third Wave’ of renewal which swept through the churches in the last quarter of the twentieth century. Wimber planted a congregation in 1977 at Yorba Linda, near Los Angeles, associated with the Calvary Chapels and the Jesus People movement, but in 1982 it went independent as ‘Vineyard’ and became the nucleus for a new charismatic denomination.¹ As Vineyard congregations multiplied across the United States of America and then Canada, Wimber was increasingly in demand internationally. When a pastor from Colorado returned from Nigeria in 1987 excited about opportunities for the Vineyard movement across the continent of Africa, Wimber emphasised that their initial priority must be ‘the Western World over and against the Two-Thirds World’. He had received over 100 invitations from Africa, Asia, Central America and South America, but declined them because these nations were ‘almost like bottomless pits’ and would have an ‘enormous inundating negative impact on our resources’.² Instead the Vineyard focus was upon wealthy nations. Wimber and his teams ministered repeatedly in South Africa (from 1980), Britain (from 1981), New Zealand (from 1986), Australia (from 1987), and continental Europe (from 1987). By 1990, Singapore and Hong Kong were added to the conference itinerary. In each nation, Wimber was hosted by local charismatic networks, helping to reinforce a complex web of global, interdenominational connections. This chapter focuses upon his European impact, first in Britain and then the rest of the continent. It examines the typical pattern of Wimber’s European conference ministry, the spread of his books through multiple European translations, and the establishment of Vineyard personnel and congregations in strategic European locations.

Early Encounters in Britain and Ireland

¹ Among the many historical and sociological studies of Wimber and the Vineyard movement, see for example: Robin D. Perrin, ‘Signs and Wonders: The Growth of Vineyard Christian Fellowship’ (PhD thesis, Washington State University, 1989); Martyn Percy, *Words, Wonders and Power: Understanding Contemporary Christian Fundamentalism and Revivalism* (London: SPCK, 1996); Donald E. Miller, *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1997); Bill Jackson, *The Quest for the Radical Middle: A History of the Vineyard* (Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing, 1999); Stephen Hunt, *A History of the Charismatic Movement in Britain and the United States of America: The Pentecostal Transformation of Christianity* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), 391-435; T. M. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God* (New York: Vintage, 2012); Jon Bialecki, *A Diagram for Fire: Miracles and Variation in an American Charismatic Movement* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017); Andy Park, Lester Ruth, and Cindy Rethmeier, *Worshiping with the Anaheim Vineyard: The Emergence of Contemporary Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2017).

² John Wimber to John Leonard, 20 July 1987, John Wimber Papers, Pennsylvania [hereafter JWPP], in care of Caleb Maskell.

By the 1960s, California had moved from a Pacific ‘frontier’ to the centre of world media networks driven by innovations, increasingly digital, in communications and entertainment. It was also an international hub for exchange of Christian strategies and experiences in the West. As an adjunct professor in evangelism and church growth at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, John Wimber encountered regular visitors from Britain. Among the first was Eddie Gibbs (an Anglican clergyman on the staff of the Bible Society in London) who met Wimber in 1978 during a two-week intensive at Fuller towards his Doctor of Ministry degree.³ Two years later, in January 1980, one of Britain’s leading charismatic evangelists David Watson (vicar of St Michael-le-Belfrey, York) was at Fuller as a visiting lecturer, and was deeply impressed by his experience of the Vineyard, especially ‘the indisputable evidence of God’s power to heal, coupled with a lot of biblical wisdom and human sanity’.⁴ As a result of these personal contacts, Wimber was invited to England in June 1981 for ministry at two Anglican congregations: St Michael-le-Belfrey and St Andrew’s Chorleywood. The transatlantic engagements were memorable and sometimes dramatic – at Chorleywood, for example, there was ‘holy chaos’ as many fell down in the pews when hippy evangelist and Jesus People veteran Lonnie Frisbee (part of Wimber’s team) invoked the Spirit.⁵ Wimber returned the following year for similar introductions to Holy Trinity Brompton and to a handful of Baptist churches in Lancashire and London. Nigel Wright (pastor of Ansdell Baptist Church, Lytham St Anne’s) described it as the occasion when ‘the experience of Pentecost became a contemporary reality’ for his congregation, which was already substantially charismatic ‘but this was like going into overdrive’. After a dull lecture by Wimber on the benefits of ‘power evangelism’ as contrasted with ‘programme evangelism’, Wright began to wonder what the fuss was about:

But then it happened. After lunch John cut short his lecture proclaiming that it was time to have some fun. He had even brought along his personal funmaker in the guise of an aging hippy called Lonnie Frisbee. Lonnie encouraged us to sing ‘Majesty’ twice and after praying simply invited the Holy Spirit to come. What then happened is exceedingly difficult to describe. Within seconds the inside of our attractive, Edwardian Baptist chapel was transformed into something resembling a battlefield. Holy carnage reigned. Not that I saw much of it because by this time I was flat on my back shaking under the power of the Holy Spirit and calling upon the name of the Lord as I had never done before. Half the church was doing something similar.⁶

Many of the congregation were ‘trembling and shaking, speaking in tongues, calling on the Lord, prophesying’, and some were ‘flapping up and down like fish upon the floor’.⁷ Men were ‘reeling round as though they were drunk’.⁸

After these initial encounters with charismatic congregations, Wimber launched a major conference ministry in Britain, soon multiplied elsewhere in Europe. The breakthrough

³ Eddie Gibbs, ‘The Evangelist’, in David Pytches (ed.), *John Wimber: His Influence and Legacy* (Guildford: Eagle, 1998), 71-2.

⁴ David Watson, *Fear No Evil: A Personal Struggle with Cancer* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1984), 52.

⁵ David Pytches, *Living at the Edge: Recollections and Reflections of a Lifetime* (Bath: Arcadia, 2002), 256. On Frisbee, see further Larry Eskridge, *God’s Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 33, 70-5; David Di Sabatino, ‘Lonnie Frisbee: A Modern Day Sampson’, in Jackson, *The Quest*, 377-91.

⁶ Nigel Wright, ‘Weighing up Wimber’, *Renewal* 152 (January 1989), 22.

⁷ Nigel Wright, ‘A Pilgrimage in Renewal’, in Tom Smail, Andrew Walker and Nigel Wright, *Charismatic Renewal: The Search for a Theology* (London: SPCK, 1993), 27.

⁸ Nigel Wright in John Gunstone (ed.), *Meeting John Wimber* (Crowborough: Monarch, 1996), 47.

event was Third Wave '84 at Westminster Central Hall in October 1984, attended by 2750 delegates, coordinated by Baptist pastor Douglas McBain and his Manna Ministries Trust. McBain had 'a great heart longing for London', which he called England's 'spiritual nerve centre', and believed that Wimber's ministry was 'part of the tidal movement of the Holy Spirit which is destined to revive Christ's whole church' in the metropolis with repercussions nationwide.⁹ After the conference week, the Vineyard team scattered to 35 satellite events in churches across London such that the impact was 'multiplied many times over'. It was a modern adaptation of the older 'simultaneous mission' model, which was to become Wimber's regular *modus operandi*.¹⁰ He returned to England for three major conferences in October 1985 at Brighton (5000 delegates), Wembley Arena (2600 delegates), and Sheffield (2500 delegates), during which it was said he had 'the crowds eating out of his hand'. Afternoon workshops addressed topics such as physical healing, inner healing, demonization and how to start a Wimber-style ministry in the local church.¹¹ There was another trio of conferences in 1986 at Brighton, Wembley Arena and Harrogate, and smaller Vineyard teams led regional conferences on healing, organized by local churches, ten in the south of England and twelve in the north.¹² Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s Wimber returned to England at periodic intervals, usually with a sizeable ministry team from California. Testimonies of 'power encounters' at Wimber events, especially miraculous healings or prophetic utterances, became a popular sub-genre in charismatic magazines, and sometimes reached book length in treatments such as Gabriele Trinkle's account of her freedom from demonic oppression, *Delivered to Declare* (1986). Wimber's visits were also the means by which many other American speakers, such as the controversial Kansas City Prophets, were introduced to the British charismatic public.¹³ This interchange of charismatic experience and personnel flowed in both directions across the Atlantic. British pilgrims travelled to California to attend Wimber's teaching at Fuller Seminary on 'Signs, Wonders, and Church Growth' (the popular MC510 course, which ran from 1982 to 1986),¹⁴ or to visit the new Vineyard headquarters at Anaheim near Disneyland – known as trips to 'Wimberland'.¹⁵ British clergy and pastors took their own ministry teams to Vineyard conferences in the United States, who then returned home full of new ideas to implement. Some stayed longer – such as Ian Prichard (a Baptist pastor in Wimbledon) who spent seven years in Anaheim from 1985 to 1991 coordinating Wimber's international conferences,¹⁶ and John Mumford (an Anglican clergyman) who spent two years in Anaheim before returning to London in 1987 to plant the first Vineyard church in Europe.

Wimber's conferences drew broad support, especially from charismatics within the historic denominations. For example, among the attenders at the Third Wave conference in 1984 the largest groups were Anglicans (42 per cent), Baptists (25 per cent), members of

⁹ Douglas McBain, 'An Emptiness at the Centre', *Renewal* 112 (August / September 1984), 22-4.

¹⁰ Douglas McBain, 'Wimber at Westminster: Following Up', *Renewal* 115 (February / March 1985), 30. For later commentary, and criticism, see Douglas McBain, *Discerning the Spirits: Checking for Truth in Signs and Wonders* (Basingstoke: Marshall Pickering, 1992), 181-97; Douglas McBain, *Fire Over the Waters: Renewal Among Baptists and Others from the 1960s to the 1990s* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1997), 91-107.

¹¹ David Pyches, 'Signs, Wonders and Joy with Wimber at Wembley', *Church of England Newspaper* (1 November 1985), 1, 3.

¹² William Mather, 'John Wimber Team in "Last Major Visit" Here This Autumn', *Church of England Newspaper* (15 August 1986), 10.

¹³ David Pyches, *Some Said It Thundered: A Personal Encounter with the 'Kansas City' Prophets* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1990).

¹⁴ Michael Harper, 'MC510: A Classroom Course in Signs and Wonders', *Renewal* 111 (June / July 1984), 22-3.

¹⁵ Eddie Gibbs, 'John Wimber: A Friend Who Causes Me to Wonder', *Renewal* 123 (June / July 1986), 16.

¹⁶ Ian Prichard, 'The Businessman', in Pyches (ed.), *John Wimber*, 161-79.

house churches (16 per cent), Pentecostals (4 per cent) and Methodists (2 per cent).¹⁷ Among the 2470 attenders at Harrogate in 1986, over fifty denominations were represented – showing a decline in Baptist attendance but a rise among Pentecostals – including Anglicans (35 per cent), members of house churches and community churches (16 per cent), Baptists (11 per cent), Pentecostals (10 per cent), Methodists (4 per cent), and Roman Catholics (3 per cent), plus other assorted groups such as the Brethren, Quakers, Nazarenes, Presbyterians, and Salvation Army.¹⁸ Wimber made particular efforts to bridge the historic Protestant / Catholic divide, though with limited success. His teaching was promoted by *Goodnews*, magazine of the Catholic charismatic renewal (CCR) in England,¹⁹ and profiled sympathetically by a street-corner evangelist from the Catholic Evidence Guild in the *Catholic Gazette*, magazine of the Catholic Missionary Society.²⁰ One Catholic healing group which used his teaching materials observed that ‘Catholics will feel on familiar ground’, especially given Wimber’s recommendation of texts like *Inner Healing* (1974) by Michael Scanlan, pioneer of the CCR in Pennsylvania.²¹ The healing of English Roman Catholic journalist Peter Jennings from sarcoidosis (a rare and potentially fatal disease) when prayed for by Wimber and his team in 1986 was profiled in the Vineyard magazine, *Equipping the Saints*, as well as by British periodicals.²² Nevertheless, it was predominantly lay charismatic Catholics, not the hierarchy, who welcomed Wimber’s ministry. *Goodnews* observed in 1988 that he had ‘not met many Catholic leaders’ during his English tours, and Wimber made a special appeal to Catholic priests to join his gatherings for pastors.²³ Charles Whitehead (chairman of the National Service Committee for the CCR in England) acknowledged that, despite Wimber’s overtures and his boost for the CCR, ‘the vast majority of Catholics in Britain were totally unaware of his existence’.²⁴

Wimber’s ecumenical strategy was evident in all his European initiatives. Two early examples are analysed here in detail: Ireland in 1986 and Scotland in 1987. In July 1986 Wimber travelled with a team of 130 people to Ireland for back-to-back conferences entitled ‘Healing in the Church’. These were held at Church House, Belfast, headquarters of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the largest Protestant denomination in the North (although the denomination’s magazine, *The Presbyterian Herald*, was notably silent about Wimber’s existence), and then at University College Dublin. The initiative was led jointly by the Christian Renewal Centre at Rostrevor, County Down, near the Irish border, and the Dublin Interdenominational Christian Committee (DICC) whose stated aims were renewal and reconciliation. The Christian Renewal Centre (founded 1974) was one of a number of ecumenical communities established during the Troubles in Northern Ireland – including the prominent Corrymeela Community (founded 1965) – but its peace-making efforts had a distinctly charismatic ethos. Its founder Cecil Kerr, a Church of Ireland clergyman, had embraced charismatic experience in 1972 after a range of international encounters, especially with the ministry of Graham Pulkingham from the Church of the Redeemer in Houston,

¹⁷ Stephen Hunt, ‘“Doing the Stuff”: The Vineyard Connection’, in Stephen Hunt, Malcolm Hamilton and Tony Walter (eds), *Charismatic Christianity: Sociological Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 94.

¹⁸ David C. Lewis, *Healing: Fiction, Fantasy or Fact?* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1989), 17.

¹⁹ See articles by David Pytches, Teddy Saunders, and Charles Whitehead in *Goodnews* 64 (June / July 1986), 12-13.

²⁰ Leonard Sullivan, ‘John Wimber at Harrogate’, *Catholic Gazette* 78 (March 1987), 26-7.

²¹ Review by Daphne Kilner, *Goodnews* 73 (January / February 1988), 13. See further, Michael Scanlan, *Let the Fire Fall* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Books, 1986; third edition, Franciscan University of Steubenville, 2016).

²² Peter Jennings, ‘An Interview That Changed My Life’, *Equipping the Saints* 1 (January / February 1987), 10-13; Peter Jennings, ‘Cured of a Killer Disease’, *Renewal* 129 (February 1987), 10-12; Peter Jennings, ‘Jesus Healed Me!’, *Church of England Newspaper* (3 August 1990), 6.

²³ ‘John Wimber Visits to England Soon Over: Priests Invited’, *Goodnews* 76 (July / August 1988), 3.

²⁴ Charles Whitehead in Gunstone (ed.), *Meeting John Wimber*, 40.

Texas.²⁵ Charismatic ecumenism was therefore the keynote of Wimber's visit. The conferences were endorsed by many denominational leaders, including Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich (Archbishop of Armagh and Catholic Primate of All Ireland) who prayed that God would use Wimber 'as an agent of healing and reconciliation among our divided communities'.²⁶ *New Creation*, a magazine for charismatic renewal across Ireland, noted that Wimber's wife Carol was a Catholic by birth; and printed a photograph of Wimber shaking hands at the opening of the Dublin conference with a smiling Lord Mayor of Dublin, Bertie Ahern (later the Taoiseach). There were 'many, many healings of heart, mind and body', the magazine reported; but significantly: 'Not one word of dissent, arrogant assertion or iota of difference towards any mainstream church was heard to detract from the fact that here were the people of God, followers of Jesus Christ, totally sharing the word of God while the church of which we are all a part is broken in body.'²⁷ The conference title 'Healing in the Church' was thus a *double entendre*, carrying corporate ecclesiological weight in a divided Ireland in contrast to more individualist interpretations of healing elsewhere in Europe.

The Dublin conference director was Paddy Monaghan, a Catholic businessman who had been simultaneously 'born again' and 'baptised in the Spirit' in February 1973 as a student at University College Dublin, after attending a charismatic prayer group. He discovered a love for Jesus and the Bible, and identified as an 'Evangelical Catholic', working for Protestant-Catholic reconciliation.²⁸ Pat Collins, another member of the DICC organizing committee, was a Catholic priest and member of the Congregation of the Mission (the Vincentians). Ordained in 1971, he quickly grew disillusioned with his ministry and his own 'emotional and spiritual poverty', yet began to yearn for 'a new experience of God'. Impressed by attending a charismatic prayer meeting in the Gregorian University in Rome at Easter 1973, and by reading Merlin Carothers's *Power in Praise* (1974), Collins was 'baptised in the Spirit' and began to speak in tongues in February 1974 while being prayed for by Cecil Kerr at an ecumenical charismatic conference at Benburb Priory, County Tyrone.²⁹ In promoting the Wimber conferences, Collins reminded his fellow Catholics that Pope John Paul II, in the first ever papal visit to Ireland in 1979, had called all Catholics to 'energetic commitment' in the pursuit of unity among Irish Christians. The Wimber conferences, Collins suggested, were a good way to honour that papal injunction.³⁰

Nevertheless, despite these ecumenical overtures, Wimber's team found themselves thrown into the midst of historic Irish sensitivities. They arrived in Belfast just a fortnight after the Twelfth of July parades, and in a political context where the Anglo-Irish Agreement, signed in November 1985, was vociferously contested. Meanwhile, at a conference in June 1985 co-sponsored by the DICC and the Rostrevor Christian Renewal Centre, Clifford Hill (founder of *Prophecy Today*) had offered a prophecy based on God's promise to restore his people from exile in Babylon 'when the seventy years are completed' (Jeremiah 29:10). Hill declared:

²⁵ 'The Wind of the Spirit', in Cecil Kerr, *The Way of Peace: Peace Amidst the Conflict in Northern Ireland* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1990), 21-39. For a journalistic exposé of Pulkingham's ministry, see Julia Duin, *Days of Fire and Glory: The Rise and Fall of a Charismatic Community* (Baltimore, MD: Crossland Press, 2009).

²⁶ *Dublin Interdenominational Christian Committee Newsletter* 11 (July / August 1986), copy at John Wimber Papers, Regent University, Virginia [hereafter JWPV].

²⁷ Bryan Kelly, 'John Wimber's Healing Message', *New Creation* 3 (1986), 19-20.

²⁸ Paddy Monaghan, 'Say You Hate Jesus or I'll Kill You', in Paddy Monaghan and Eugene Boyle (eds), *Adventures in Reconciliation: Twenty-Nine Catholic Testimonies* (Guildford: Eagle, 1998), 165-72.

²⁹ Pat Collins, 'Living by Faith', in Monaghan and Boyle (eds), *Adventures in Reconciliation*, 185-7.

³⁰ Pat Collins, 'Healing in the Church', *The Furrow* 37 (July 1986), 475.

The Lord has good plans for the people of Ireland. I love you my people. I weep over the troubles in your land. The Lord said that the 70 years are almost up. These are the 70 years since 1916. The Lord says that the rebellion in 1916 was a rebellion against Him. The English rebelled against God as well as the Irish. I had good plans to bring a united Ireland in a community of nations in these British Isles as a family of people under God, as one family belonging to one another.

Only when the Christian leaders of England came to Ireland to repent before God of all their responsibility, Hill prophesied, ‘only then will the Lord pour out the rain of Heaven in Holy Spirit revival on to this land and there will be peace’. The seventieth anniversary of the Easter Rising was commemorated in April 1986, just three months before Wimber’s team arrived in Dublin, so the timing seemed auspicious. ‘We believe your ministry is part of the equipping of the Irish saints in this coming revival’, the DICC wrote excitedly to Wimber’s American recruits. They were beseeching God, with prayer and fasting, ‘for Holy Spirit revival to sweep this nation’.³¹ To orientate the Vineyard visitors in the spiritual and political significance of this moment in Irish history, the DICC sent them the text of Hill’s prophecy, with an article from *Prophecy Today* by Monaghan on ‘Ireland: The Blood Sacrifice’. It asserted that Padraig Pearse and the other republican heroes of 1916 by laying down their lives were not following Christ’s example but unconsciously re-enacting ‘an ancient pagan myth, a blood sacrifice to an earth goddess’. Republican and Loyalist paramilitaries in the 1980s, Monaghan continued, had been led astray by ‘a deceiving demonic spirit. The goddess “Eire” may well have been a demon worshipped by our ancestors whose cult has been kept alive in our midst.’ To break this demonic power both sides must be willing to say, ‘Lord, I don’t care whether we are ruled from Dublin, Stormont or Westminster, or whether our pillar boxes and buses are green or red. I am willing to give up everything I hold dear in order that Jesus may reign in this land.’³² It is not clear how Wimber’s team (many of them young people from California) negotiated these deep religious sensitivities. The following summer 1987, Wimber returned to Ireland for another pair of conferences in Belfast and Dublin, but perhaps by then the early enthusiasm had evaporated. He reported back to Vineyard supporters that 1987 had been ‘a very difficult year’, culminating in the Belfast visit where there were five local murders during their few days in the city, as well as ‘very limited endorsement’ from local leaders. As a result Wimber had ‘despaired of helping the church’.³³

The explicit ecumenical nature of Wimber’s strategy is shown further by the arrangements for his first Scottish conference, on ‘Power Evangelism’, at Edinburgh in September 1987. The local organizer was Brian Hayes, pastor of Edinburgh City Fellowship, formerly part of the Elim Pentecostal Church before reconstituting itself as an independent ‘house church’. Hayes thought it important for Wimber to visit Scotland, not just England, because ‘Scotland so often gets missed out when it comes to the things of the Spirit’.³⁴ Vineyard agreed, on condition that the invitation came from ‘a wide spectrum of churches and church leaders of significant standing’. They wanted to make ‘as big an impact on the church as practically possible’, believing that the vision God had given them should be ‘shared with the whole Body of Christ’. Therefore it was important that Vineyard should not be ‘clearly identified with any one church section or grouping’.³⁵ Hayes worked hard to recruit a broad reference group. It included leading figures from the CCR in Scotland, such as

³¹ Paddy Monaghan and Anne McNamara to Wimber’s team, 1 August 1986, JWPV.

³² David Blake and Paddy Monaghan, ‘Ireland: The Blood Sacrifice’, *Prophecy Today* 2 (May / June 1986), 23-6; republished in *Presbyterian Herald* (Belfast) 495 (July / August 1986), 4-6, 40-1.

³³ John Wimber to ‘Dear Vineyard’, no date [January 1988], insert in *The Vineyard Newsletter* 3 (Winter 1988).

³⁴ Brian Hayes to Ian Prichard, 26 August 1986, JWPV.

³⁵ Prichard to Hayes, 19 June 1986, JWPV.

Mark Dilworth and David McGill. Dilworth, a Benedictine monk, first embraced charismatic spirituality in 1972 on retreat at Our Lady of Guadalupe Abbey in the Pecos River Canyon, New Mexico, an early centre of the CCR.³⁶ McGill was founder in 1981 of the Community of the Risen Christ in Glasgow (linked to the Sword of the Spirit network in the United States),³⁷ national chairman of the Scottish CCR, and had organized the recent FIRE rally at the Royal Highland Showground at Ingliston, Edinburgh, in May 1985, a CCR jamboree attended by 4000 people.³⁸ In collaborating closely with Catholic renewalists in Scotland, Hayes found them to be ‘extremely enthusiastic when it comes to the things of the Spirit’.³⁹ Also on the reference group were representatives of the Scottish Episcopal Church (Bishop Derek Rawcliffe of Glasgow and Galloway, and evangelist Philip Noble, both of whom had served as missionaries in Melanesia), alongside leaders from the Methodist, Congregationalist and Baptist renewal networks in Scotland, although the Baptist Union of Scotland refused to support the conference because of ‘serious reservations’ over Wimber’s theology and ministry.⁴⁰ Elim Pentecostal Church gave full support, but the Scottish Assemblies of God declined. There were also representatives of independent churches, including Peter Hadden, founder in 1982 of Rhema Scotland with congregations in Edinburgh and Kirkcaldy.

Others were more hostile, however. Among the Roman Catholic hierarchy, Thomas Winning (Archbishop of Glasgow) did not want Wimber ‘ranting and raving’ around his diocese.⁴¹ There was also a cool reception from the Church of Scotland, the largest denomination. Within the Kirk, Hayes mourned, ‘many people are just church-goers and there is not too much interest in the things of the Spirit let alone signs and wonders’,⁴² though there was some support from the Church of Scotland renewal network. The organizing committee aimed to send advertisements ‘to every single minister of every denomination in the whole of Scotland’, though ignored most Presbyterians.⁴³ Their press briefing emphasised that the conference was ‘decidedly ecumenical – it is an event for the whole church by the whole church’. It also sought to reassure worried Scots that Wimber was not a typical American:

John Wimber is an American Evangelist who does not fit into the normal mould associated with such figures. He is not a ‘faith healer’, there are no emotional appeals for money, no histrionics, no slick-suit or well-heeled image, no questionable fund-raising techniques. John Wimber is altogether different . . . his personal manner is almost laissez-faire, his dress sense more in keeping with a surf-board enthusiast . . . his entire ethos is that he should give away his teaching

³⁶ ‘Obituary: Abbot Mark Dilworth’, *The Scotsman* (3 March 2004), 20. See also Mark Dilworth, ‘Renewal and Scottish Catholics’, *Renewal* 86 (April / May 1980), 26-30.

³⁷ Kristina Cooper, ‘Scottish News: Community of Risen Christ Celebrates 25th Anniversary’, *Goodnews* 185 (September / October 2006), 32-3.

³⁸ ‘FIRE: A Catholic Alliance of Faith – Intercession – Repentance – Evangelism’, *Goodnews* 57 (April / May 1985), 2; ‘FIRE Comes to Britain’, *Goodnews* 58 (June / July 1985), 2-3.

³⁹ Hayes to Prichard, 26 August 1986, JWPV. For sympathetic Catholic commentary, see ‘Power Evangelist to Visit Scotland’, *Scottish Catholic Observer* (17 April 1987); ‘Ecumenical Welcome for John’s “Power Evangelism”’, *Scottish Catholic Observer* (2 October 1987).

⁴⁰ Hayes to Prichard, 26 August 1986, JWPV.

⁴¹ David McGill to Mark Dilworth, 5 May 1987, Mark Dilworth Papers, KC52/91/6, Scottish Catholic Archives, Edinburgh.

⁴² Hayes to Prichard, 26 August 1986, JWPV.

⁴³ Hayes to Prichard, 15 April 1987, JWPV.

to others; as a result he has not become a one man operation – he will never be a charismatic superstar.⁴⁴

The conference filled Edinburgh's Usher Hall to its 2500 capacity. Yet ironically, despite the ecumenical attempts to rally all the Scottish churches, almost 60 per cent of the attenders made the journey from south of the border.⁴⁵ The English remained Europe's dominant charismatic market, even in Scotland's capital.

After the main event in Edinburgh, the Vineyard team scattered across Scotland to satellite conferences, entitled 'Healing in the Kingdom of God', held at seven locations – Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Inverness, Perth, Stirling, and Duns. Again, charismatic ecumenism was the keynote. At Duns, in the Scottish Borders, the three-day 'healing seminar' in the primary school was led by Brent and Happy Rue from California, but leaders from five local churches joined forces to organize the event – pastors from a small Christian fellowship in Eyemouth, a Family Church in Berwick-upon-Tweed, a Community Church in Alnwick, the Episcopal rector of Duns, and the Roman Catholic priest in Duns who was said to be 'the liveliest person around'.⁴⁶ Vineyard set a minimum target of 250 delegates for each of these regional conferences, though the local organizers were advised to be ready for 500 if the Holy Spirit sent many more.⁴⁷ Across the seven venues, the average attendance was 209, with only Glasgow and Edinburgh exceeding the target. Duns attracted just 155, though this was more than Perth, Inverness or Stirling. It was suggested that before Wimber visited Scotland again, they needed to 'gain more momentum with the denominational churches'.⁴⁸

Publications and Translations

Wimber's conferences generated significant interest in his teaching materials. Publishers Hodder and Stoughton (headquartered in London) immediately saw his marketability and worked hard to secure him as an author. Their first approach was as early as January 1983.⁴⁹ 'Hodders', which had a history in religious publishing stretching back to the 1860s, aimed to capitalize on the runaway success of David Watson's last book, *Fear No Evil* (1984). That volume, they celebrated, was 'selling extremely well and broke all sales records in this country', with impact not only in the Christian market but among secular readers also.⁵⁰ Wimber was persuaded to sign a multi-book deal, which appeared as *Power Evangelism* (1985), *Power Healing* (1986) and its study guide *Practical Healing* (1987), and *The Dynamics of Spiritual Growth* (1990), all co-authored with Kevin Springer.⁵¹ They were commended by forewords from prominent British charismatics – Anne Watson (David Watson's widow), Michael Harper, and Michael Green respectively. The first in the series was the most successful in commercial terms: *Power Evangelism* was launched in October 1985 to coincide with Wimber's British tour, and sold briskly at the rate of 33,000 copies in

⁴⁴ 'Press Release' in 'Power Evangelism (Signs and Wonders): Information Pack' (typescript, April 1987), JWPV.

⁴⁵ Hayes to Prichard, 7 September 1987, JWPV, gives the number of attenders (before bookings closed) as Scotland 778 (36 per cent), England 1280 (60 per cent), International 88 (4 per cent).

⁴⁶ Hayes to Brent and Happy Rue, 19 September 1987, JWPV.

⁴⁷ "'Healing in the Kingdom of God": Regional Conferences, Scotland 25th-28th September '87: Information & Guidelines' (typescript, July 1987), JWPV.

⁴⁸ Mike Poulton (Edinburgh City Fellowship) to Prichard, 26 November 1987, JWPV.

⁴⁹ Carolyn Armitage (Hodder and Stoughton) to Wimber, 12 January 1983, JWPV.

⁵⁰ David Wavre (Hodder and Stoughton) to Wimber, 21 July 1984, JWPV.

⁵¹ For the early contract negotiations, see Wavre to Wimber, 5 June and 9 August 1985, JWPV. The American edition of *The Dynamics of Spiritual Growth* was titled *Power Points*.

the first six months.⁵² A new edition appeared in April 1992, to coincide with his visit to Spring Harvest, and another in 1997.⁵³ By 2006 it had sold more than a million copies worldwide, and was ranked by *Christianity Today* in the top dozen most significant books to have shaped evangelicalism since the Second World War.⁵⁴

To capitalise on early book sales, during 1988-89 Hodders reissued Wimber's 'Kingdom Series' of seven booklets (originally published by Servant Ministries, linked to the Word of God Community in Ann Arbor, Michigan), with titles such as *Kingdom Living*, *Kingdom Mercy*, *Kingdom Suffering*, and *Kingdom Fellowship*: at 95 pence each for less than 30 pages it was an expensive product which proved more difficult to market.⁵⁵ One Baptist reviewer complained that the Kingdom booklets were 'popular in the extreme', far too brief to allow for theological nuance or careful exposition: 'What we have here is a shaky edifice of half-baked ideas, built on questionable assumptions and shored up by anecdotes. It may be received enthusiastically by the naïve, but that does nothing for the health of the Church.' Readers were directed to *Power Evangelism* and *Power Healing* for a more serious introduction to Wimber's views.⁵⁶ Hodders also tried to secure the rights to market Wimber's audio and video teaching tapes in Europe, noting that 'our growth possibilities in this area are considerable, as we come into an increasingly illiterate age', though Wimber declined Hodders' offer in preference for tape distribution via Terry Virgo's New Frontiers network.⁵⁷

The publisher made the most of Wimber's international potential. David Wavre of Hodders prayed that *Power Healing* would have 'an immeasurable effect on people throughout the world, in different languages, and cultures, who will ultimately end up with a copy in their hands. It really is a privilege to be publishing such a great book.' The volume, he reiterated to Wimber, would be 'immensely used and richly treasured by many throughout the world'.⁵⁸ One obvious market was North America, and Hodders sold the whole multi-book deal to Harper and Row (later Harper Collins) in California.⁵⁹ Unlike most American charismatic leaders, who published first in the United States and then in Britain, Wimber worked the opposite way around. In many ways his profile was higher in Britain, as 'a big fish in a small pond', than back in his native land. *Power Evangelism* and *Power Healing* were written with a British readership in view, published first in Britain and only subsequently reissued in the United States. Yet the transatlantic transfer was problematic. The contract negotiations were fraught and a last minute attempt to alter the terms left Roy Carlisle at Harper and Row 'furious at Hodders at this latest incredible attempt to change the whole deal. Never in my publishing history have I experienced anything like this. It is so unprofessional it borders on dishonesty.'⁶⁰ The American edition of *Power Evangelism* was set from scratch, partly so it could be revised (including a new foreword by C. Peter Wagner of Fuller Seminary to replace the earlier version by Anne Watson) and partly because 'the British typesetting is so awful'.⁶¹ There were further problems with *Power Healing*. Wimber opened the volume with an account of his friendship with David Watson, and an apology for his prayers for the evangelist's healing from cancer. This was a point of major controversy in

⁵² Roger Palmer (Hodder and Stoughton) to Wimber, 25 July 1986, JWPV.

⁵³ Armitage to Wimber, 31 October 1991, JWPV.

⁵⁴ 'The Top 50 Books That Have Shaped Evangelicals', *Christianity Today* (6 October 2006), 51-5.

⁵⁵ Wavre to Kevin Springer, 15 December 1987; Ann Spangler (Servant Publications) to Wimber, 29 September 1989, JWPV.

⁵⁶ Review by Eddie Larkman, *Mainstream Newsletter* 35 (January 1990), 13-14.

⁵⁷ Wavre to Wimber and Springer, 28 January 1987, JWPV; 'Teaching Tapes to the Commonwealth', *Equipping the Saints* 1 (March / April 1987), 14.

⁵⁸ Wavre to Wimber, 15 August 1986, JWPV.

⁵⁹ Wavre to Roy M. Carlisle (Harper and Row), 22 April 1985, JWPV.

⁶⁰ Carlisle to Wimber and Springer, 17 September 1985, JWPV.

⁶¹ Carlisle to Springer, 14 November 1985, JWPV.

Britain where Watson had been a much-loved charismatic celebrity, but he was almost unknown in North America. Carlisle protested: 'it sets the whole tone of the book off on the wrong foot. . . . It sounds defensive, it reads defensive and it is defensive. It makes it seem like John is more interested in defending his own ego and reputation than he is in just stating the case of what his ministry is all about.' Wimber's interaction with Watson, continued Carlisle, 'plays up one small personal event that is of no real consequence or interest to 95% of the people who will read the book. . . . I will not accept the manuscript as publishable or release the monies involved until this matter has been resolved.'⁶² The Wimber / Watson relationship, which dominated charismatic discourse in Britain, was irrelevant to Americans. It was deleted from the American edition, and Michael Harper's foreword was likewise dropped in favour of one by the Quaker theologian Richard J. Foster, a more prominent Christian personality on that side of the Atlantic.

In a further collaboration, Springer edited a collection of sixteen personal testimonies from charismatic leaders across the globe who had been impacted by Wimber's ministry. Eight were from the United States and three from Canada, including John White, an English-born author and former missionary to Latin America. Three contributors ministered in England (David Pytches, Terry Virgo, and Anne Watson), one in Hong Kong (Jackie Pullinger), and one in New Zealand (Murray Robertson, a Baptist pastor). The original proposal included additional chapters from Lord John Eldon (a lay Catholic in London), Peter Yarr (an independent pastor in Belfast), and John Squires (an Anglican rector in Sydney, Australia), but they were dropped.⁶³ The volume was published in Britain by Marshall Pickering as *Riding the Third Wave* (1987) and in North America, rearranged and repackaged, by Harper and Row as *Power Encounters* (1988).⁶⁴ But from an American perspective, Carlisle was again cautious. He acknowledged that Wimber and Springer had 'to think about an international marketplace', but warned that testimonies from 'obscure British people' were not easy to sell in America. These publishing qualms demonstrate that charismatic transnationalism was not a level playing field. American parochialism continued to influence marketing decisions. It was more difficult for British charismatics to gain a hearing in North America than *vice versa*.

Having successfully exported Wimber's books back to the American market, Hodders turned their attention to international translation rights. By April 1986 they had secured contracts for translations of *Power Evangelism* into German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian and Finnish, with negotiations ongoing for Danish, Italian, Chinese, Polish and Afrikaans.⁶⁵ In West Germany, Projektion J (Project Jesus), a charismatic and ecumenical mission agency, was quick off the mark with *Vollmächtige Evangelisation* (1986), *Heilung in Der Kraft Des Geistes* (1987), and *Die Dritte Welle des Heiligen Geistes* (1988). In Sweden, Wimber was taken up by the Pentecostal publishers responsible for *Dagen* (a daily newspaper founded in 1945 by Swedish Pentecostal pioneer Lewi Pethrus), though they were not able to give full endorsement to his theology. *Power Evangelism* and *Power Healing* were translated without comment as *Övernaturligt* (1986) and *Helandets Kraft* (1987), but a Pentecostal afterword was added to the Swedish translation of *The Dynamics of Spiritual Growth* insisting, *contra* Wimber, that Spirit baptism was a post-conversion experience. They were nonetheless willing to publish his teaching, '*trots att vi inte på alla punkter ser lika*' ('even though we

⁶² Carlisle to Wimber and Springer, 7 August 1986, JWPV.

⁶³ For the original proposal, see Wimber and Springer to Carlisle, 6 January 1987; Wimber and Springer to Wavre, 7 January 1987, JWPV. The volume was declined by Hodder and Stoughton.

⁶⁴ Kevin Springer (ed.), *Riding the Third Wave: What Comes After Renewal?* (Basingstoke, 1987); Kevin Springer (ed.), *Power Encounters Among Christians in the Western World* (San Francisco, 1988).

⁶⁵ Wavre to Wimber, 15 April 1986, JWPV.

don't agree on all points').⁶⁶ In Finland, Wimber's publisher was Päivä, the publishing arm of Suomen Vapaakirkko (the Evangelical Free Church of Finland), a charismatic breakaway from Finnish Lutheranism with roots in nineteenth-century American-influenced revivalism.⁶⁷ In the Netherlands, the connection was with charismatic publishers Uitgeverij Gideon. Their back-catalogue included such American Pentecostals as David Wilkerson's *Het Kruis in de Asfaltjungle* (1966) and Nicky Cruz's *Ik Zal Nooit Meer Huilen* (1974), to which they added translations of Wimber as *Een Koninkrijk van Kracht* (1987), *Een Kracht tot Genezing* (1988) and *Kracht om te Groeien* (1991).

Hodders found that the greatest difficulty was selling *Power Evangelism* to traditional Catholic countries such as Spain, Italy and France. Conservative Catholic publishers did not want it, and there were very few charismatic publishers in those regions.⁶⁸ A small Italian publisher, *Uomini Nuovi* (New Men), was interested in *Power Evangelism* but their royalties offer was considerably below the standard rate. Hodders saw the deal more 'as a missionary venture, rather than in commercial terms', but Wimber declined in the expectation that Roman Catholic interest in his books would soon gather pace.⁶⁹ *Uomini Nuovi* managed to attract other international authors to their growing catalogue with translations of 1970s classics, including Dennis and Rita Bennett's *Lo Spirito Santo e Voi* (1989), Larry Christenson's *Una Mente Rinnovata* (1990), Kathryn Kuhlman's *Non è Mai Troppo Tardi* (1991), Hal Lindsey's *Addio Terra, Ultimo Pianeta* (1991), and Corrie Ten Boom's *Il Nascondiglio* (1994), but they never secured Wimber. French translations of his first two books, from a small charismatic publisher in Rouen, appeared as *Allez, Guérissez par la Puissance de Jésus* (1988) and *Allez, Évangélisez par la Puissance de Jésus* (1989).

Another emerging market for charismatic materials was the Soviet bloc. A Christian from Prague (her identity hidden by *Equipping the Saints* for her own protection) visited Anaheim in late 1986 and reported: 'During the past ten years, there have been many little fires of renewal breaking out in Czechoslovakia [*sic*], among both Protestants and Catholics. There are some who have prophesied that a great renewal is coming, and that it will start in East Germany.' She had translated *Power Evangelism* into Czech, and ten copies in typescript were circulating among the underground churches.⁷⁰ At Wimber's second major conference in Frankfurt, in November 1988, a collection was taken to raise money for translating and printing his books in Eastern Europe.⁷¹ With the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the spread of *glasnost*, new opportunities opened up. *Power Evangelism* was published in Hungarian in 1990, Polish in 1991, and Czech in 1992.⁷² Vineyard materials were also disseminated in Russian, coordinated by charismatics in Germany.⁷³ Beyond the borders of Europe, translations of *Power Evangelism* appeared in Japanese in 1991, Korean in 1993, and Turkish in 1995.⁷⁴ Vineyard music was another key part of the international brand, distributed in Europe by Kingsway publishers. Early albums *Just Like You Promised* and *You Are Here* were released in Britain in June 1986 and sold over 22,000 cassettes within 18

⁶⁶ 'Tillägg till den Svenska Utgåvan', in John Wimber with Kevin Springer, *Kraftnedslag* (Stockholm, 1991), 242.

⁶⁷ In Finnish, *Power Evangelism* appeared as *Ihmeet Ja Merkit: Voimaevankeliointi Nykyajan Seurakunnassa* (Hämeenlinna, 1987) and *Riding the Third Wave* as *Kolmas Aalto* (Hämeenlinna, 1990).

⁶⁸ Wavre to Wimber, 9 September 1986, JWPV.

⁶⁹ Wavre to Wimber, 4 June 1986; Wimber to Wavre, 19 August 1986, JWPV.

⁷⁰ 'Reports from Abroad', *Equipping the Saints* 1 (January / February 1987), 14.

⁷¹ Anna Morley-Brown (Hodder and Stoughton) to Wimber, 8 June 1990, JWPV.

⁷² Morley-Brown to Wimber, 8 June 1990; Karen McNally (Hodder and Stoughton) to Wimber, 5 February 1991; Mary Hargreaves (Hodder and Stoughton) to Springer, 23 January 1992, JWPV.

⁷³ Günter Oppermann (Projektion J) to Wimber, 10 May 1989, JWPV.

⁷⁴ Hargreaves to Wimber, 25 April 1991, JWPV; Steve Zarit (Vineyard Ministries) to Kim Nam Soo (Seoul), 12 October 1993, JWPP; Eric Major (Hodder and Stoughton) to Wimber, 31 October 1995, JWPV.

months; followed by numerous other albums including the best-selling *Hosanna* and its accompanying songbook released in Britain, Germany and Sweden during 1987.⁷⁵ Wimber's books and booklets, marketed alongside his conferences, teaching tapes, and Vineyard music, were a key conduit of Californian-style charismatic spirituality into multiple European contexts.

Extending Vineyard's Reach

One Vineyard historian described Britain as the 'European beach-head' to the rest of the continent.⁷⁶ Its strategic links to Europe (and the British Commonwealth) were significant, and English charismatics were often early-adopters of American trends before they spread globally. Many airline routes between North America and Europe passed through Heathrow, and the London metropolis was thus a hub for the transnational flow of charismatic personnel and ideas. In an interview with the *Church of England Newspaper*, Wimber reported a vision he had received when he first arrived at Heathrow airport in 1981 at the start of his British ministry, about reaching the rest of Europe, almost identical to a vision he had experienced in 1963 shortly after his conversion: 'When I got off the plane, the Lord knocked me to my knees. People thought I had stumbled or fallen. But actually I hadn't fallen. I was knocked down. As I was trying to get up I saw this vision again. The Lord said, "Now is the time".'⁷⁷ His visits to Britain were thus, in the words of Michael Harper, 'preparation for a wider European ministry'.⁷⁸ Wimber's early British conferences included many international visitors. For example, at Harrogate in 1986, 206 attenders (8 per cent of the total) were from outside Britain. They included contingents from Germany and the Netherlands who were provided with simultaneous translation, over 50 from Norway (mostly young people from Youth With A Mission), and others from Ireland, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greece, Israel, Australia, South Africa, Nigeria, Uganda, and elsewhere.⁷⁹ There were six visitors from Iceland, who returned to Reykjavik with enthusiastic reports of '*undur, tákn og kirkjuvöxtur*' ('signs, wonders and church growth').⁸⁰ Faroe Islanders were also among the international attenders at Edinburgh in 1987, provided with translation loop facilities.⁸¹ Andy Costa, a Californian church planter in Tuscany, hoped to 'to air-lift as many Italian church leaders as possible' to Wimber's British conferences in 1986, seeking to raise financial subsidies for 15. Costa felt that charismatic renewal was struggling in the Italian context ('It makes Arkansas look as easy as eating pizza pie'), but he promoted 'God's third wave' of the Spirit among local pastors and was confident that if they attended Vineyard conferences in England then 'it will break-open Italy in a marvelous way'.⁸² Soon continental Europe, despite the language barriers, became a specific strategic focus for the Vineyard movement.

Some of Wimber's early European exchanges were as a contributor to conferences arranged by other organizations, rather than as 'top billing' at his own. For example, he attended the Lausanne Consultation on the Work of the Holy Spirit and Evangelization, co-sponsored by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and the World Evangelical Fellowship, which gathered at the Intermission Bible School in Oslo, Norway, in May 1985.

⁷⁵ Nigel Coltman (Kingsway) to Zarit, 18 November 1988, JWPV.

⁷⁶ Jackson, *The Quest*, 251.

⁷⁷ Mather, 'John Wimber Team'.

⁷⁸ Michael Harper, 'As the Spirit Moves Across Europe – Welcome to ACTS '86', *Renewal* 123 (June / July 1986), 4.

⁷⁹ Lewis, *Healing*, 16.

⁸⁰ Ólöf I. Davídsdóttir, 'Bodun í Krafti Heilags Anda', *Hlutverk* (May 1987), 3-5 (copy at JWPV).

⁸¹ 'Power Evangelism Conference: Edinburgh, September '87: Staff Briefing' (typescript, 1987), JWPV.

⁸² Andy Costa to David Taylor (Vineyard Ministries), 14 April 1986, JWPP.

Wimber was one of 46 invited participants – prominent evangelists, theologians, and pastors from across the globe – and presented a paper on ‘The Holy Spirit and Personal Evangelism’.⁸³ The event which dramatically enhanced his European reputation was ACTS ’86, a five-day ‘festival of faith’ at Birmingham’s National Exhibition Centre in July 1986. It was designed as a successor to the ‘Pentecost Over Europe’ renewal conference at Strasbourg in 1982, which had been attended by 20,000 charismatics from across the continent.⁸⁴ The original vision for the Birmingham event came from Michael Harper, David Watson and Robert Roxburgh (a Baptist pastor in Guildford) but they drew together a broad European committee.⁸⁵ Speakers included Peter Kuzmic (Bible college principal in Yugoslavia), Volkhard Spitzer and Wolfram Kopfermann (pastors in West Germany), Kalevi Lehtinen (European director of Campus Crusade for Christ), David Berly (founder of the *Communauté Chrétienne de la Réconciliation*, a charismatic Baptist congregation in France), Tormod Engelsen (a Norwegian missiologist), and Bertil Gärtner (Lutheran bishop of Gothenburg, Sweden), alongside British charismatics like Michael Green, David MacInnes, David Pytches, Tom Walker and Clive Calver. The worship was led by Lars Mörlid and Peter Sandwall from Sweden, former leaders of the Choralerna gospel choir. Harper called it ‘one of the biggest ever invasions of our country by Christians from the continent of Europe’.⁸⁶ There were 7000 delegates, with consecutive translation from English into German from the platform, and translation into a further five European languages via radio head-sets.⁸⁷ Harper saw the event as a step towards the fulfilment of prophecies from Wimber, Jean Darnall and Klara Schlink (‘Mother Basilea’, founder of the Evangelical Sisterhood of Mary in Darmstadt, West Germany) that the blessings of charismatic renewal poured upon Britain should be shared with the whole of Europe.⁸⁸ Yet the most eagerly anticipated speaker at ACTS ’86 was neither British nor European, but from California – John Wimber. This new profile among the mobile, transnational charismatic culture afloat in secular Europe, stimulated a cascade of invitations to speak elsewhere.

Wimber’s first West German conferences were held in Frankfurt in October 1987 and November 1988, hosted by Projektion J and the *Geistliche Gemeinde-Erneuerung* (GGE), the Lutheran movement for charismatic renewal within the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* (EKD). Günter Oppermann of Projektion J declared that Wimber’s visit was of ‘decisive importance for the spiritual situation of Germany’, although there was ‘an “icy wind” blowing in our faces’ from some evangelical critics.⁸⁹ From one of the satellite conferences in Nuremberg, Californian team member Ed Piorek reported enthusiastically to Wimber that a key spiritual breakthrough for the German attenders came with ‘an experiential release from the sins of their fathers’. The Vineyard team led the group in repentance, ‘especially concerning the war’:

An inevitably visitation of the Holy Spirit occurred. The older people began to weep for the first time in their lives. A deep emotional cleansing took place. After that we imparted the Kingdom ministry. It was incredible. They all began to fall like dominos. One of the most wonderful anointings I have ever seen.⁹⁰

⁸³ For the gathered wisdom of the Oslo consultation, see David F. Wells, *God the Evangelist: How the Holy Spirit Works to Bring Men and Women to Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987).

⁸⁴ David MacInnes, ‘ACTS 86: Broadening Vision’, *Renewal* 120 (December 1985 / January 1986).

⁸⁵ Michael Harper, ‘That was ACTS 86: Now For a New Day’, *Renewal* 126 (November 1986), 16-17.

⁸⁶ Harper, ‘As the Spirit Moves Across Europe’, 4.

⁸⁷ ‘Uniting Europe’s Christians’, *Church of England Newspaper* (1 August 1986), 1.

⁸⁸ Harper, ‘As the Spirit Moves Across Europe’, 4. For Darnall’s 1967 vision of revival fires spreading from Britain across the Channel to Europe, see Jean Darnall, *Heaven, Here I Come* (London: Lakeland, 1974), 112-3.

⁸⁹ Oppermann to Wimber, 6 February 1987, JWPV.

⁹⁰ Ed Piorek to Wimber, 14 October 1987, JWPP.

The German coordination team was led by one of Wimber's fellow speakers at ACTS '86, Wolfram Kopfermann, Lutheran pastor in Hamburg and chairman of the GGE, but Kopfermann's secession from the EKD in 1988 to establish the Anskar network of churches was a setback to Wimber's German relationships.⁹¹ He forged a significant connection instead with Martin Bühlmann, pastor of the German-speaking Basilea congregation in Bern, Switzerland, who was Wimber's translator on the platform at ACTS '86 and both the Frankfurt conferences. Bühlmann had experienced evangelical conversion in 1975, aged 20, through the visit to Thun by Indian evangelist and church planter Satish Raiborde (founder of Charisma Family Church). During six months at Nagpur, Maharashtra, in 1978, Bühlmann witnessed miracles for the first time and through Raiborde was introduced to American charismatics in the shepherding movement. During a visit to California in 1982 he encountered Vineyard and returned to Switzerland with about a hundred cassettes of Wimber's teaching which he devoured as a young church planter. So when invited to translate for Wimber at Birmingham, Bühlmann jumped at the chance. He organized 'healing seminars' in autumn 1987 in five Swiss cities – Basel, Bern, Lausanne, Winterthur, and Zürich – to introduce Vineyard teaching to Reformed and Pentecostal circles, followed by major Wimber conferences in Bern from November 1988. The Basilea congregation was soon adopted into the Vineyard family and Bühlmann was appointed to oversee the growing Vineyard network throughout the German-speaking territories of central Europe in Switzerland, reunified Germany, and Austria, working across traditional Protestant / Catholic boundaries.⁹²

One of the attenders at Wimber's first Frankfurt conference in 1987 was Jan Bernard Struik, pastor at Wageningen in the Netherlands. Raised within a branch of the *Gereformeerde Kerken*, he had been 'touched by the Holy Spirit' in 1970, aged 20, through a Full Gospel congregation, and readily embraced Wimber's ministry through which he 'tasted the presence of God'.⁹³ In autumn 1988 Struik spent four weeks at the Vineyard Ministry School in Lancaster County, California – as part of a small international group of pastors including English Anglicans, Norwegian Lutherans, and New Zealand Methodists – and returned home after 'the time of my life' to implement these lessons in a Dutch context.⁹⁴ Dutch charismatics who had attended Wimber conferences in Germany or Britain, or who had made pilgrimages to California, established the Kana Committee (named for the village where Jesus turned water into wine) to promote Vineyard principles. Under Struik's chairmanship, they hosted Wimber conferences at Zwolle for three years in succession, 1991 to 1993, with the usual satellite events in other Dutch towns and cities. There was thus a regular flow of Vineyard speakers and musicians from North America to the Low Countries. In March 1994 Struik's Wageningen congregation was adopted under the Vineyard banner, followed by new church plants in 1997 at Zwolle and Utrecht, and the network soon spread to Belgium and Luxembourg. Struik was appointed leader of Vineyard Benelux, and coordinated the Vineyard missions in Poland and the Baltic States.⁹⁵

Further north, the Vineyard movement also began to take root in Scandinavia. An early foray was the attempt by Steve Sjogren (an American of Swedish descent) and his wife

⁹¹ On Kopfermann and the GGE, see Reinhard Hempelmann, 'The Charismatic Movement in German Protestantism', *Pneuma* 16 (Fall 1994), 215-26.

⁹² Interview with Martin Bühlmann, 7 November 2018.

⁹³ Jan Bernard Struik, *Our Journey with the Vineyard* (Amersfoort: Inside Out, 2016), 21, 30, originally published as *Onze Reis met de Vineyard* (2016).

⁹⁴ Struik, *Our Journey with the Vineyard*, 38.

⁹⁵ Struik, *Our Journey with the Vineyard*. See also, Peter G. A. Versteeg, *The Ethnography of a Dutch Pentecostal Church: Vineyard Utrecht and the International Charismatic Movement* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010).

Janie to plant a church in Oslo. But it proved hard going and they soon returned to the United States, where they had more success in founding Cincinnati Vineyard, Ohio, in 1985 which grew rapidly to 6000 attenders, famous for pioneering 'servant evangelism'.⁹⁶ Wimber was a keynote speaker at ecumenical conferences hosted by Bishop Gärtner in Gothenburg in May 1988 and July 1990, drawing charismatics from all the Nordic countries. Among the Swedish attenders was Hans Sundberg, a Baptist pastor from Stockholm who had experienced 'Spirit baptism' in 1972 as a student in Uppsala during a mini-revival led by the Jesus People movement. His encounter with Wimber felt like 'coming back to my Jesus People roots'.⁹⁷ Sundberg travelled to California to learn from Vineyard in its native habitat, including four weeks in January 1989 at the Vineyard Ministry School in Lancaster County. He organized Vineyard's first major Scandinavian conference, at Stockholm in June 1991, at which Wimber, Paul Cain, and Brent Rue were the keynote speakers. The main conference was preceded by satellite events in fifteen locations across Iceland, Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden – including at the Filadelfiakyrkan (Philadelphia Church) in Stockholm, the largest Pentecostal congregation in northern Europe. The following year Sundberg planted the first Vineyard church in Scandinavia, which began in a restaurant in Stockholm city centre.⁹⁸ Similar plants followed in all five Nordic countries, placed under Sundberg's oversight as Vineyard Nordic from 1998.

In France, there were Wimber conferences in Paris in October 1989 and September 1992, coordinated by the *Communauté Chrétienne du Point du Jour*, the largest charismatic congregation in the country, led by Baptist pastor Jules Thobois. At the first event there were 900 participants and Wimber was supported by two fellow Vineyard pastors from California, John McClure and Ed Piorek. The ministry team of 120 was, as usual, predominantly American, though forty were English charismatics who made the short journey across the Channel. Addressing French Baptists, there was public support for Wimber's ministry from Mark Farmer, an American church planter with WEC International (Worldwide Evangelisation for Christ).⁹⁹ French Calvinists, however, resisted the Californian visitors by translating *Wimber: Friend or Foe?* (1990), a strident critique by Australian evangelicals from the diocese of Sydney.¹⁰⁰ These were proxy battles, reflecting wider theological tensions in the Anglophone world, transplanted to French soil.

Unlike their successes elsewhere in Northern Europe, Vineyard failed to establish roots in France, which Wimber attributed partly to inherent French antipathy to all things American.¹⁰¹ Charlie Cleverly, an Oxford-educated Anglican charismatic, served from 1992 as a church planter at Belleville, a multi-ethnic district in Paris, on secondment from the Church of England to *l'Église Réformée de France* (ERF), the largest Protestant denomination. Cleverly had attended Wimber conferences in England and visited Anaheim three times in the 1980s with groups from St Aldate's, Oxford. He considered joining Vineyard, but Wimber counselled him to remain embedded in the indigenous ERF as more likely to bear fruit, and the Belleville congregation grew from 26 to 400 within a decade. At Cleverly's invitation, Wimber visited Belleville in August 1995, alongside Martin Bühlmann,

⁹⁶ See further, Steve Sjogren, *Conspiracy of Kindness: A Refreshing New Approach to Sharing the Love of Jesus with Others* (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1993).

⁹⁷ Interview with Hans Sundberg, 22 October 2018. For the Jesus People in Scandinavia, see Richard Bustraan, *The Jesus People Movement: A Story of Spiritual Revolution Among the Hippies* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014), 49-53.

⁹⁸ Interview with Hans Sundberg, 22 October 2018.

⁹⁹ Mark Farmer, 'Reflexions Personnelles sur le Seminaire de John Wimber', *Les Cahiers de l'Ecole Pastorale Baptiste* 7 (1990), 25-8.

¹⁰⁰ Phillip D. Jensen *et al*, *Guérisons et Miracles Aujourd'hui: John Wimber et le Nouveau Mouvement Charismatique* (Aix-en-Provence: Kerygma, 1990).

¹⁰¹ Wimber in conversation with Charlie Cleverly.

to teach a small ecumenical group of 25 church leaders.¹⁰² Wimber had often addressed large gatherings of hundreds of pastors, but he promised to travel to Paris for just six on condition that it brought together Catholic and Protestant leaders as equals, 'because [God] loves the whole Church'.¹⁰³ This was the stimulus for major ecumenical charismatic gatherings in Paris, *Embrase Nos Coeurs*, launched in 1997, a title borrowed from the French translation of Guy Chevreau's study of the Toronto Blessing, *Catch the Fire* (1994). It became an annual event, a French parallel to England's New Wine, organized by an ecumenical committee chaired by Cleverly but with significant Catholic representation.¹⁰⁴

Wimber's forays into Eastern Europe were rare, but in 1991 and 1993 he led conferences in Poland at the invitation of local Catholic charismatics.¹⁰⁵ Three thousand attenders filled the Warsaw Congress Hall for a three-day conference in healing, at which Wimber was joined on the platform by American Catholic evangelists Ralph Martin and Peter Herbeck, followed by satellite events in nine Polish towns. The 50-strong ministry team came from Britain, mainly from Edinburgh City Fellowship and Holy Trinity Brompton.¹⁰⁶ Once again, Wimber's European initiatives were explicitly ecumenical. After Poland there were invitations to Ukraine, newly independent after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, but Wimber was prevented through illness from extending his ministry that far to the east.¹⁰⁷

The focus of Wimber's early European ministry in the 1980s was characterised by resourcing and training local churches through major teaching conferences, staffed by Americans, with a promise not to plant Vineyard congregations in Europe. But the momentum proved irresistible and Wimber lifted his moratorium on church planting as Vineyard enjoyed a turn towards missions in the early 1990s.¹⁰⁸ For a brief period, the rate of church growth (by birth or adoption into the Vineyard movement) was dramatic. During 1985 the number of Vineyard congregations doubled from 70 to 139, spreading from Southern California across America, and formal organization became necessary with Wimber as international director of the Association of Vineyard Churches.¹⁰⁹ By 1993 there were 402 congregations in 20 countries. Of these 328 were in the United States, 30 in Canada, and 24 in Europe (seven in England, seven in Russia, two in Scotland, two in Switzerland, and one each in Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Norway and Sweden), plus further congregations in Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, South Africa, Namibia, Lebanon, and Japan.¹¹⁰ Two years later there were 524 congregations, a 68 per cent rate of growth since 1991, with two new Vineyard congregations being planted each week worldwide and 2000 forecast in 50 countries by the year 2000.¹¹¹ The globe was divided into five 'theatres of operation', each under a national director.¹¹² Bob Fulton (Wimber's brother-in-law and

¹⁰² Interview with Charlie Cleverly, 3 October 2018.

¹⁰³ Charlie Cleverly, *Epiphanies of the Ordinary: Encounters that Change Lives* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2012), 186.

¹⁰⁴ Interview with Charlie Cleverly, 3 October 2018. See also, Charlie Cleverly, *Une Passion pour l'Église* (Nîmes: Vida, 1999).

¹⁰⁵ Dariusz M. Cupial, 'Renewal Among Catholics in Poland', *Pneuma* 16 (Fall 1994), 231.

¹⁰⁶ 'Holy Trinity Team Sets Off For Poland', *HTB in Focus* 13 (March 1993), 3; 'To Poland with Love', *HTB in Focus* 14 (April 1993), 4-5; 'Catholics and Protestants Learn the Wimber Way in Poland', *Goodnews* 105 (May / June 1993), 3.

¹⁰⁷ Hayes to Gennadi Valuev (Kiev), 10 May 1993; Hayes to Zarit, 28 May 1993, JWPP.

¹⁰⁸ John Wimber, 'The Vineyard's Call to Missions', *Equipping the Saints* 5 (Summer 1991), 26-8; Bob Fulton, 'Missions Update: Local Churches Ignited for Global Missions', *Equipping the Saints* 6 (Fall 1992), 27-8; Todd Hunter, 'Re-envisioning the Vineyard', *Equipping the Saints* (Third Quarter 1995), 9-12.

¹⁰⁹ *First Fruits* (March / April 1986), 6; Sam Thompson, 'The Birthing of a New Organization', *First Fruits* (May / June 1986), 13-15.

¹¹⁰ Bob Fulton, 'Missions Update: Giving Away What We've Received', *Equipping the Saints* 7 (Fall 1993), 28.

¹¹¹ John Wimber, 'Your Spirit is Moving . . . All Over the World', *Equipping the Saints* (Third Quarter 1995), 4.

¹¹² Bob Fulton, 'Theatres of Operation', *Equipping the Saints* (Third Quarter 1996), 19, 22.

Vineyard's international coordinator) declared that 'The Vineyard is a church planting movement'. Charismatic renewal was not simply about training in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, but should invigorate people to 'go out, win souls, and plant churches'.¹¹³ This global diversity was on display at the annual Vineyard International Pastors Conference at Anaheim in July 1995 for Vineyard pastors and their families (numbering 2300 people). In a memorable scene, the pastors' children marched through the sanctuary waving flags from the 22 countries represented, while Vineyard musician Terry Butler led a rendition of his song *All Over the World*, with its repeated refrain 'All over the world / All over the world / Your Spirit is moving'.¹¹⁴ The high rate of expansion was not sustained, but by the time of Wimber's death in November 1997, aged 63, the Vineyard movement was firmly established as a global charismatic denomination. Outside of North America, Europe proved its most fruitful context.

Conclusion

When Eric and Peggy Stovesand of Indio Vineyard near Palm Springs, California, joined Wimber's team at the *Erweckung* ('Revival') conference in Switzerland in August 1991 they were 'overwhelmed by the favor God has granted you and the Vineyard in Europe'.¹¹⁵ During the previous decade, Wimber's principles had been successfully transplanted from California to multiple European contexts, and continued to grow. His conferences and books, first in English and then in other languages and locales, helped to galvanize the disparate European charismatic networks. Congregations worshiping in German, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Polish, Russian, and many other tongues, were born or adopted into the global Vineyard family. Wimber's ministry built a web of significant, if sometime fractious, transatlantic relationships, enabling the regular flow of charismatic ideas and personnel between Europe and North America, and between Britain and the continent. These conduits continued to function after Wimber's personal influence had waned, for example with the spread of the Alpha evangelistic programme from 1993 and the 'Toronto Blessing' phenomenon in 1994-95, both of which followed in channels which Wimber's European ministry had established. Wimber's legacy for transnational charismatic renewal stretched far beyond the Vineyard, and created fruitful interdenominational linkages between charismatic personalities, publishers, and programmes which continued to gather momentum in the new millennium.

¹¹³ Bob Fulton, 'Vineyard, Missions, and the Mission of Jesus', *Equipping the Saints* (Third Quarter 1995), 16, 18.

¹¹⁴ Wimber, 'Your Spirit it Moving', 4.

¹¹⁵ Eric and Peggy Stovesand to Wimber, 26 September 1991, JWPV.