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and enhance the experience of life. Its purpose is to serve the common good. To remove that sphere from the purview of the gospel and exempt it from its critique is to castrate the gospel itself and render it impotent in a society that desperately needs its transforming ferment.

It is beyond question that these days of suffering, disgrace, and shame are the darkest in the history of the country. But they will not be its final moments. In fact, I see in them a critical juncture, a turning point for a better tomorrow. I see in these calamities the unprecedented opportunity for the church to resolve to proclaim, live, and demonstrate the full gospel in the Haitian context. Three factors combine to make this moment opportune.

First, if anyone ever thought that it was a benign matter for a society to have a completely unaccountable government, the tragedy of January 12 should disabuse them of such a misguided view. In the aftermath of the earthquake, it is evident to all that thousands of lives would have been saved if the country were equipped with the most basic disaster preparedness and response system, and if it had a government that felt the obligation to provide a modicum of leadership in that moment of crisis. Feeling completely unanswerable, the government was missing in action. And that irresponsiveness proved fatal not only to the poor, but the rich as well. Until help arrived from the international community, the people were their own first responders, performing rescue operations with bare hands.

Second, while in the past, the

church could cite repression and the fear of reprisals as existential reasons for its posture of disengagement from the political domain, the recent loosening of the political knot with the advent of multi-party politics and the recognition of some freedom of expression undoubtedly render such explanation no longer compelling. The risks of retaliation and recrimination still exist. But the opportunity for the church to assert itself and reclaim its right to speak prophetically has never been greater. The church must not let that opportunity slip away. It must seize it, and resolve to no longer allow the political power to take it away.

Third, in recent times, various bodies within global evangelism have been awakened to the truth that if the evangelical witness is to have a chance of transforming society in any meaningful way, and in so doing improve the plight of the poor, such a witness must go beyond poverty alleviation and the provision of social services. It must include social action and social advocacy. At this time, if the Haitian church musters the courage to embrace the challenge of political engagement,⁵ it will find much encouragement and support from the broader evangelical world. Let us hope that it will do so.

⁵ By political engagement, I am not talking about involvement in partisan politics. I am convinced that the church, as a corporate body, should stay out of this in order to maintain the integrity of its prophetic witness. It is essentially this prophetic witness, this advocacy and push for the creation of an environment conducive to the flourishing of human life, that I call political engagement.

Edinburgh 2010 and the Evangelicals

Klaus Fiedler

Keywords: Ecumenical movement, unity, revivals, missionary societies, faith missions, classical missions, conversion, ecclesiology

I Edinburgh 1910 in Context

Edinburgh 1910 was a huge success, and success always has many fathers, including some who only claim to be such. As the Christian world (or much of it) celebrates this event after 100 years, there are several heirs, all claiming that they continue with the spirit, or the achievements, or the structures of that conference.

I was first alerted to this syndrome when the World Student Christian Federation in 1985 seized the opportunity of the 75th anniversary of Edinburgh 1910 to celebrate it with its own conference.¹ Was not Edinburgh 1910

organized by John Mott of the Student Volunteer Movement (SVM), the forerunner of the World Student Christian Federation (WSCF)? John Mott was indeed influenced by the SVM, and the WSCF was indeed its successor, but Edinburgh 1910 was not a students' conference. When finally Edinburgh 1985 took place, what happened there seemed to bear little resemblance to what had excited the Christian (or at least the Protestant) world so much 75 years before. The main speakers were: Emilio Castro (then WCC General Secretary), Kosuke Koyama, Annathia Abayasekera, Enrique Dussel, Orlando Costas, Mercy Amba Oduyoye and Leonardo Appies. They mostly looked for the 'Greater Christ' of whom John Mott had spoken at the end of the Conference. The 'Greater Christ' was seen as the liberator from economic and political oppression, leaving little room for the 'smaller' Christ as saviour and liberator from sin, or for the mission

¹ In the invitation also shared the World Council of Churches, the British Council of Churches, and 15 churches and missions.

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society as a means to spread that message.²

In this article I do not want to give an overall account of Edinburgh 1910,³ nor do I want to lodge another claim to paternity; but I want to look at it narrowly from the evangelical angle, trying to assess their (limited) share in the conference and their (less limited) place in the developments of the next one hundred years.⁴

Grown up and converted in the Baptist (revival) tradition, I was brought into ecumenical surroundings by a WCC scholarship to study at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda; I have worked as a Christian Brethren missionary in Southern Tanzania, as a pastor and school teacher sixteen years in Germany, and came in 1991 to Malawi

to teach at the University. Trained as a missiologist, I follow Kenneth Scott Latourette in my understanding of church history; Latourette bases his monumental work on the premise that the Holy Spirit moves forward church (and mission) history by bringing in ever new revivals that produce ever new organizations.⁵

During my research into the history and ecclesiology of the [Interdenominational] Faith Missions movement,⁶ I developed my understanding of missions as children of revivals. When I had started in the 1950s to read the journals of the German missions, I saw repeatedly that the missions are the children of the Revival, meaning the Great Awakening, which became important in Germany around 1815. Thirty years later I realized how true that was, but I had to add a plural 's', because the missions by then were children of five different revivals, though the Classical Missions (as I call them), coming from the Great Awakening, at that time still strongly dominated. Indeed, the Holy Spirit moves forward church history by bringing in ever new revivals which produce ever

2 Klaus W. Müller, 'Auf der Suche nach einem größeren Christus—In Search of a Larger Christ. Studenten-Missions-Konferenz Edinburgh/Schottland, 24.-28. Juni 1985. 75 Jahre nach der ersten Weltmissionskonferenz in Edinburgh 1910', *Evangelikale Missiologie* 1/1986, 7-13.

3 For the full record of the Conference see: *World Missionary Conference, 1910* (Edinburgh & London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier; New York, Chicago and Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1910). (These are the reports of the eight commissions published before the Conference.) After the Conference, the proceedings were published as *World Missionary Conference, 1910. The History and Records of the Conference* (Edinburgh & London: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier; New York, Chicago and Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1910). All nine volumes are now available on the Edinburgh 2010 website, www.edinburgh2010.org.

4 For a deep searching and far reaching interpretation of the Conference and its relevance read, David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross (eds), *Edinburgh 2010: Mission then and now* (Oxford: Regnum, 2009).

5 For a good overview of Christian history under these premises see the chapter, 'A Brief Summary of the Course thus far Traversed' in Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, vol. 7, *Advance through Storm* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976, 1945), 416-465.

6 Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen. Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen* (Giessen/Basel: Brunnen, 1992). The English version, reduced by one third, rearranged and with an additional chapter, is Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions. From Hudson Taylor to Present Day Africa* (Oxford et al: Regnum, 1994).

new organizations, and missions are most prominent among these. Indeed, the mission society was born at the beginning of what Latourette calls the 'Great Century',⁷ and it is worth quoting William Carey for that:

Suppose a company of serious Christians, ministers and private persons, were to form themselves into a society, and make a number of rules respecting the regulation of the plan, and the persons who are to be employed as missionaries, the means of defraying the expence, etc., etc. This society must consist of persons whose hearts are in the work, men of serious religion, and possessing a spirit of perseverance; there must be a determination not to admit any person who is not of this description, or to retain him longer than he answers to it.⁸

We notice that in 1792, after the *mission societies* (not the churches) took upon themselves the evangelization of the world, as Andrew Walls points out, the Holy Spirit had made gentle fun of the churches (so well organized and so busy with their own concerns) by setting them aside and pursuing his own course with those who were willing and interested.⁹ It was the revival (and its

7 Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, vol. 7, 445, and vols 5 and 6 of his *Mission History*.

8 William Carey, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen* (Leicester: 1792), 82-83.

9 Andrew Walls, 'Vom Ursprung der Missionsgesellschaften—oder: Die glückliche Subversion der Kirchen', *Evangelikale Missiologie* (1987), 35-40; 56-60; English version, *Evangelical Quarterly* 88:2 (1988), 141-155.

mission societies) that changed the religious map of the world. It was the mission societies (and not the churches) that constituted the membership of the big Edinburgh conference, 176 of them, 59 from North America, 58 from the European Continent, 47 from Britain, 3 from South Africa and 9 from Australasia.¹⁰ So I see Edinburgh 1910 as the culmination of the 'Great Century', dominated by the classical Missions that were the children of the Great Awakening.

I write this article as an evangelical, and I owe my readers my definition of 'Evangelical', which may not be uncontested. The evangelicals are a distinct group among the Protestants, but their identity, distinct as it is, is *non-demarcated*. Evangelicals, in their many groups and many forms, share five emphases: personal faith, conversion, love for the Bible, evangelism/missions and the translation of such faith in social engagement. Such evangelicals ('in the wider sense') are found in virtually all the Protestant denominations and, at least since the Charismatic Revival, even in the Roman Catholic Church. The other definition is historical, in that it includes (only) those Protestant groups and denominations whose spirituality goes back to the Holiness Revival of 1858 as I call it or, as others call it, to the Second Evangelical Awakening.¹¹ In this arti-

10 Listed in volume 9 of the conference report, and summarized in David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross, 'Introduction', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 3-20.

11 This 'historical' definition also includes groups from earlier revivals that were influenced by the piety of the Second Evangelical Awakening.

cle I use both definitions, but since it is a historical study, the latter (evangelicals in the narrower sense) is the dominant one.

II The Revivals and Edinburgh 1910

With Latourette I therefore see mission history as based on revival history. Every great advance in missions is based on a new revival movement, and I have heard of hardly any mission movement that was not born in revival. The picture is a bit uneven, but the overall pattern is clear.

The revival of the Reformation produced virtually no missions on the Protestant side, but plenty on the Catholic, with the Jesuits as the leading missionary order.¹² During the time of Orthodoxy, some leading Lutheran theologians even saw foreign missions as sinful, since the Great Commission had been given to the apostles alone (*ad personam*) who had indeed fulfilled it, preaching even in those parts of the world which had not yet entered into the view of either Western or Arab geography. Since the office of apostle was an extraordinary office of the church, to start missionary work after their death was seen as the sin of usurpation of divine office.¹³

While the official churches were secure in their rejection of missions, the Puritan and Pietist revival took up the missionary task on the Protestant side, with the small Moravian Church taking the lead.¹⁴ The next revival was the Great Awakening; its beginnings are usually dated to Jonathan Edwards (1734), while the Wesley brothers and George Whitefield are usually mentioned as the great evangelists.¹⁵ Against theological opposition from the churches of the Reformation, William Carey had made it clear that the Great Commission was still valid and binding, and to fulfil it he proposed the mission society as the *means* to reach the heathen. He was innovative, as revivalists usually are, and his ideas were taken up enthusiastically by many in the Great Awakening revival tradition. In kind disregard of the established churches' authorities, they took up the task of reaching the unreached parts of the world, which were many in those days.

When the fervour of the Great Awakening had quietened down somewhat, another revival came, often hardly recognized as such, the Restorationist Revival that endeavoured to restore the primitive church

once more before the end.¹⁶ This Restorationist Revival provided the subsequent revival, the Second Evangelical Awakening (Holiness Revival) of 1858 with its innovative premillennial eschatology, replacing the post-millennial eschatology of the Great Awakening.¹⁷

In Edinburgh the Reformation Revival was not represented by any mission, since the Catholic missions had not been invited and the few Protestant attempts at missions had not lasted. (But the Reformation Revival was present at the conference in the many church leaders and dignitaries who had been invited.) Of the Puritan/Pietist Revival only the Moravian Mission survived and was represented by a dozen delegates; however, its distinctives had merged with those of the classical missions, the many missions that the Great Awakening had brought into existence. These classical missions were the dominant group in Edinburgh, sending about 95 per cent of the delegates.

Of the missions from the Restorationist Revival, the Brethren and the Churches of Christ could not be represented because only mission societies

were invited, which they refused to organize, for theological reasons based on their ecclesiologies.¹⁸ The only 'Restorationist' representation at the conference was by three Seventh-day Adventist delegates¹⁹ and sixteen delegates from the Disciples of Christ.²⁰

Though the Second Evangelical Awakening, different from the Restorationist Revival, had largely remained within the existing churches, it did produce a distinctive group of missions, the interdenominational Faith Missions. These were in no way opposed to the classical Missions; neither did they intend to compete with them. Their aim was to continue the advance into unreached areas where the advance of the classical missions had stopped.²¹ Due to their innovative principles the Faith Missions attracted many candidates which the classical missions would not have wanted; much of their support came from the groups created or influenced by the Holiness Revival. Though they cooperated happily with the classical missions, they were a distinct group right from the beginning, a fact blissfully ignored by the organizers of Edinburgh 1910. The Faith Missions grew slowly, and in

¹² Besides the Jesuits, born in the Reformation Revival, there were other orders like the Franciscans and the Dominicans who came from the earlier monastic revival (Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity. Beginnings to 1500* (Peabody: Prince Press, 2007), 416-446.

¹³ The only exception of a kind was that Christian princes who happened to rule over

non-Christian populations were allowed (even encouraged) to provide churches for them, too.

¹⁴ Of the Puritan/Pietist missions the Danish Halle Mission in India succumbed to the Enlightenment, the Puritan missions among the Native Americans succumbed to the vicissitudes of the American expansion; only the Moravian Mission survived.

¹⁵ Note should be taken that the Calvinist George Whitefield was as great an evangelist as the Arminian John Wesley.

¹⁶ Klaus Fiedler, "A Revival Disregarded and Disliked" or What do Seventh-day Adventists, Churches of Christ, Jehovah's Witnesses and the New Apostolic Church have in Common?, *Religion in Malawi* 15 (2009), 10-19.

¹⁷ Klaus Fiedler, 'Shifts in Eschatology—Shifts in Missiology', in Jochen Eber (ed), *Hope does not Disappoint. Studies in Eschatology. Essays from Different Contexts* (Wheaton: World Evangelical Fellowship Theological Commission; Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 2001).

¹⁸ The Churches of Christ foreign missionary effort was limited, but the 'Open' Brethren were very strong in foreign missions.

¹⁹ Most evangelicals present would have preferred not to be associated closely with them, suspecting them of sectarianism, in spite of their common roots.

²⁰ The Disciples have the same revival roots as the Churches of Christ, but had developed by 1910 a quite liberal theology.

²¹ See map for Africa in Klaus Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, 85.

Edinburgh, when the classical missions had about reached their peak, they were still generations away from theirs.

The next revival, born in Asuza Street in Los Angeles, that was to change the face of world Christianity, was only a baby then, four years old when Edinburgh 1910 convened, and about two when the research for the reports finished. By 1910 the Pentecostal mission had started, but there were no properly organized mission societies yet, and since they could not anticipate the future tremendous growth of Pentecostal missions, the Edinburgh organizers may be excused for overlooking it. And of course, none of them could foresee that in 1960 yet another revival would erupt that again would challenge many accepted theories.²²

III Evangelical Missions and Edinburgh 1910

For this section I employ the narrow definition of evangelical, since the conference was a conference of mission societies. Though in other areas the demarcation of evangelical is fuzzy, as far as mission societies are concerned, the definition is clear: it was the 1858/59 Second Evangelical Revival that produced its own distinct class of missions, the Faith Missions, not

opposed to but clearly different from the classical missions. How did they react to the invitation and how did they participate?

1. The Evangelical Participation

Like all the other Protestant missions, the Faith Missions were invited to participate, and participate they did. 30 of the over 500 British delegates came from the Faith Missions. North America, with a similar number of delegates, only brought 13. Of the 98 German delegates, eight were evangelicals, as were four among the Swedish delegates. At the Conference the Faith Mission delegates were a minority, below 5 per cent. The strongest Faith Mission was the China Inland Mission with 17 of the 55 Faith Mission delegates.

Their number was small, so was their role at the Conference, and so was then their role in the worldwide Protestant missionary movement. The oldest Faith Mission was only 45 years old,²³ not just one more mission, but a mission of a new type. It took thirteen years for Fanny Guinness to found the Livingstone Inland Mission (1878) as the second Faith Mission.²⁴ Most of the major Faith Missions were less than 20 years old, and many of them had had to struggle over years just to get established and to survive. So maybe the conference leadership can be excused

for not recognizing that the Faith Missions represented a new missionary movement, having its own history and spirituality.

Among the main speakers there was no member of a Faith Missions. Three Faith Mission members gave short presentations. Rev. B. Fuller (Christian Missionary Alliance, India) spoke on 'The Work in the Mission Field' as one of eight presenters; Mr. D. E. Hoste (China Inland Mission) spoke on 'Education of Christian Community, Adult and Juvenile' and 'Should the missionary devote chief attention in raising up and helping to develop a Native Evangelistic Agency, or to doing direct Evangelistic Work himself?'. The latter topic was dear to the heart of the CIM missionaries, as was Mr. W. B. Sloan's presentation on 'The Rights of Native Christians'.

I also found two Faith Mission contributions to the discussions: Dr Karl Kumm (Sudan United Mission) spoke during the discussion on Africa, and Dr Lepsius of the Deutsche Orient Mission contributed to the discussion on the 'Missionary Message in Relation to Islam'. One special recognition was accorded to them during the Conference. When, on 30 June 1910, the news was received that Grattan Guinness, the Faith Mission pioneer in Britain after Hudson Taylor, had died, the Conference rose to honour him and sang a hymn. In Edinburgh the evangelicals played their (limited) role well, but it was not their conference.

2. The Neglect of Inner Africa

Edinburgh 1910 was organized to promote the evangelization of the non-Christian world. In the preparations for

the conference, at its core, conflicts arose. The Sudan United Mission minuted on 30 December 1909:

World Mission Conference—donation—: that before we consider the voting of any such donation a strong statement should be laid before the authorities of the conference, of the very unsatisfactory position of the whole Sudan question as presented to their constituency.

The Conference organizers took the point and gave Karl Kumm the opportunity to present the plea of the Sudan in a side meeting during the conference, and on 13 June 1910, a day before the Conference opened, £30 was voted as the SUM's contribution, and two delegates attended the conference.

The report of Commission One recorded not only that one third of Africa was unreached, but also claimed that none of the mission agencies had any plans to reach that remaining third, which must have included the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia), the Sudan Belt and the Congo Basin as its main components.

The heart of Africa constitutes a vast unoccupied field... more than a third of the entire continent without any existing agency having plans actually projected for their evangelization.²⁵

²² Over the last years the World Council of Churches has strongly taken note of the Pentecostals, pushed by the successes of the Charismatic Movement and is trying to organize a partnership that does not require WCC membership under the theme of the World Christian Forum.

²³ Klaus Fieldler, 'The Principles of the China Inland Mission', *Story of Faith Missions*, 33, and chapter 2, 'A New Missionary Movement: The Early Faith Missions', 32-69.

²⁴ Fanny Guinness, *The New World of Central Africa. With a History of the First Christian Mission in the Congo* (London: 1890).

²⁵ World Missionary Conference, 1910, 'Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World, Report of Commission I' (Edinburgh and London: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier; New York, Chicago and Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1910), 281/282. For more see Andrew F. Walls, 'Commission One and the Church's Century', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 27-40.

In making this statement, they overlooked the several evangelical missions that not only had plans to enter the remaining third of Africa but who had been doing that for a good number of years.²⁶ They had overlooked the evangelical missions in the Maghreb (North Africa Mission (1881), Algiers Mission Band (1888), Southern Morocco (Medical) Mission (1888), and they had overlooked the fact that the Sudan Interior Mission had started to approach the Sudan Belt in 1902, through Central Nigeria, with the Sudan United Mission joining them four years later after the attempts to reach the Sudan from Aswan in 1900 had not succeeded.²⁷

In the decade before the Africa Inland Mission had started the work in Inner Kenya in 1895 with the aim of advancing to Lake Chad. The Commission had equally overlooked the fact that the Gospel Missionary Union (later Christian Missionary Alliance) had started in 1889 to reach the Sudan Belt from Sierra Leone and that missionaries related to the East London Training Institute had since 1878 been on their way into the interior of the Congo Basin.

Edinburgh 1910 did not discriminate against the Evangelicals, neither

did John Mott, the chairman of Commission I (Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World). But the Commission simply was not in touch with what the evangelical missions were doing and planning; the missionary advance into the unreached areas of Africa had started to slip into Evangelical hands.

3. Not South America

The more fundamental conflict erupted on the issue of missionary work in Latin America. Here the Conference organizers decided plainly against all that was crucial for evangelicals. The minutes of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union of 13 October 1909 read.

A communication was also read from the Secretary of the World Missionary Conference in answer to the protest of the Directors at the exclusion from the deliberations of the conference of work in Roman Catholic lands.

On 13 January 1910 the issue was discussed further:

After some discussion it was unanimously resolved to arrange a meeting to consider the advisability of calling a Conference with reference to work in Roman Catholic countries, and as to whether the Roman Catholic Church is to be looked upon as a sister church or not.

Such a conference did not take place, at least not soon, and the RBMU did participate in Edinburgh 1910 with five delegates. They made no fuss about the issue, but all evangelicals were agreed that faith makes you a member of the church, not any sacrament. They did not only see Latin America as a mis-

sionary land,²⁸ but equally so Russia, Belgium, Guinea Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands. They did not see the Roman Catholic Church as a true Christian church, though they accepted the possibility of Roman Catholic individuals being true Christians.²⁹ The evangelicals did not accept the sacramental definition of being a Christian; for them it was not baptism that made the difference, but the new birth, which had always been the central point in the revival tradition.

4. Personal Faith versus Baptism

The decision not to look for personal faith but for sacramental treatment is crucial for the understanding of Edinburgh 1910, as it marks a major turning point in the history of the classical missions. The report, in its terse language, expresses it like this: It was agreed 'to confine the purview of the Conference to work of the kind in which we are all united'.³⁰ The Faith Missions had to accept that if they were to participate; they accepted for the Conference, but did not change their ecclesiology.

The new departure in ecclesiology was clearly expressed by Lord Balfour, the chairman of the Conference, in his inaugural address:

No expression of opinion should be sought from the Conference on any matter involving any ecclesiastical or doctrinal question on which those taking part in the Conference differ among themselves.³¹

This statement, no doubt honest, overlooks the fact that the decision not to include any missionary work in Catholic or Orthodox countries was a serious doctrinal question which raised deep differences in ecclesiology. At stake was the definition of what the church is. In the revival tradition, even in the majority section that remained within the traditional denominations, to be a Christian (and thereby a member of the church) was defined as having a personal faith, not as having received the sacrament of baptism. Edinburgh 1910 changed this position, and that changed the whole development of the missionary movement that had emanated from the Great Awakening. The emphasis, gradually, shifted from converting the unconverted to keeping the converted (plus many unconverted) together. This switch in ecclesiology made it possible that a conference, convened 'to consider missionary problems in relation to the non-Christian world' became the starting point of a movement for the unity of churches.

5. 'Unitedly working to denominationalize men and means'

Another entry in the minute book of the Sudan United Mission, written three months after Edinburgh 1910, reveals

²⁶ They also overlooked the [classical] Church Missionary Society, which was then making serious attempts to reach the Sudan through Nigeria's Middle Belt.

²⁷ On these attempts they could have read Karl Kumm, *The Sudan* (London, 1907). For a scholarly study see Christof Sauer, 'Reaching the Unreached Sudan Belt. Guinness, Kumm, and the Sudan-Pionier-Mission', DTh University of South Africa, 2001.

²⁸ Lucy Guinness and E.C. Millard, *South America. The Neglected Continent* (London, 1894).

²⁹ *Evangelical Alliance. Report of the Proceedings of the Conference, held at Freemasons' Hall, London, from August 19th to September 2nd inclusive, 1846* (London, 1867), 263-270.

³⁰ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, 8; cf Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 7.

³¹ *World Missionary Conference, 1910*, 8.

another far reaching criticism of the Conference and the trends it represented.

[Karl Kumm] expressed the view that 'the Layman's Foreign Mission Movement, the Student Volunteer Movement, the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference are all unitedly working to denominationalize men and means'.³² The minutes give no evidence for his assumptions, but Karl Kumm seems to have captured an important trend: away from the society as a voluntary association (which after all was the key to the beginnings of the classical missions) right into the wide open arms of the (organized) churches. The interesting touch to his opinion is that the agents of denominationalization were voluntary associations themselves who seem to have lost touch with their origins.

The Conference did much to give the denominations prominence. Earlier conferences had been dominated by mission leaders and missionaries; in Edinburgh denominational leaders were included as much as possible and were given leading roles. Their inclusion, as far as the (in England then still dominant) Anglican Church was concerned, was achieved successfully, but at a price, too high for the evangelicals to pay. The Anglican Church had three 'branches' then: Low, Broad and High. The Low Church had produced the Church Mission Society as the second mission society of the Great Awakening (1795), and, as the Evangelical (in the wider sense) branch of Anglican-

ism, it cooperated closely with the Faith Missions;³³ however, conflicts arose about the demands of the High Church (Anglo-Catholic) branch. The Faith Missions saw the Anglo-Catholic understanding of baptism as highly sacramentalistic, and they were in no way willing to accept that any territory which had been Christianized must be excluded from missionary work. The Broad Church presented lesser problems when it came to participation, but its broadly anti-conversionist theologies opened the way for increasing theological liberalism and the replacement of evangelism by social improvement.³⁴

So this denominationalization of the missionary movement (others would call it 'integration of mission and church') in Edinburgh 1910 paved the way for turning the missionary movement of the Great Awakening into a movement for church unity. And since this church unity was understood to be *corporate*, the evangelicals with their concept of individual unity were bound, over time, to lose interest or to come into conflict with the idea. It was the logical (and detrimental) consequence of the developments which were reflected in Edinburgh 1910 that in 1961 resulted in the termination of the existence of the International Council of Missions in New Delhi and its con-

³³ The China Inland Mission, the first of the Faith Missions, not only had a distinct Anglican section, but even produced an Anglican bishop.

³⁴ Cf. Rose Dowsett, 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: An Evangelical Perspective', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 250-262 [254].

³² SUM minutes, 4 October 1910.

version to a Department of the World Council of Churches.

6. Unity does not Promote Missions

For another major conflict the Evangelicals had around Edinburgh 1910 I have found no entry in the minute books, but I find the conflict in their assumptions and in the actions based on them. One of the big catchwords of Edinburgh 1910 was 'Christian unity'. The assumption that greater organizational unity would promote greater efficiency in fulfilling the worldwide missionary task seems to have gone unchallenged. When John Mott, the chairman of Commission One, emphasized the need and the chance to enter 'the so-called unoccupied fields' of the non-Christian world in the present time, he also emphasized that a divided Christendom was no match for the challenge.³⁵

If such a quest for unity could find its expression in missionary cooperation, evangelicals were happy to go along. Usually they were willing to agree on comity of missions, an agreement that divided the mission field into spheres of work and influence. This kind of agreement also obliged each mission to accept members in good standing of another mission, who moved into their 'territory', as equal to their own members, with the participation in the sacraments included. With the mainstream of Edinburgh, evangel-

icals were able to see such 'comity' as a means to work more effectively, though they neither realized nor anticipated that the 'native' Christians were anything but glowing adherents of the comity system.³⁶

Another concept was to build a 'united native church',³⁷ at which futile attempts were made soon after Edinburgh in Kenya, Malawi and Nigeria, and probably in other countries.³⁸ Though the Faith Missions usually went along a certain distance on the path to unification, finally their different ecclesiology, affirming not the sacraments but personal faith, could not be accommodated, nor could they be convinced to see the 'threefold office' as the precondition for a church to be a true church.³⁹

Another assumption that went unchallenged in Edinburgh but was quietly disregarded by the evangelicals was that greater unity would bring greater efficiency in missions. In Germany, before and after the big Conference, the complaints of the classical missiologists, led by Gustav Warneck, the 'Father' of German missiology, that

³⁶ For details and perceptions see Fiedler, *The Story of Faith Missions*, 188-193.

³⁷ 'to plant in each non-Christian nation one undivided Church of Christ' (World Missionary Conference, *Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity*, 83).

³⁸ In Kenya the crucial event was the Kikuyu 1913 conference. In Malawi the Church of Central Africa (CCA) was envisaged, but only Presbyterian missions joined, making the CCA to be the CCAP (Church of Central Africa, Presbyterian).

³⁹ An attempt to go again in this direction was more recently made by the Lima Document

³⁵ World Missionary Conference, 1910, *Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World*, 403.

the evangelical missions were just too many, too small and usually working in the wrong places (as among Muslims,) never fell silent. They were members of the German Mission Council (Mission-srat), but quite junior members. When Julius Richter, in Edinburgh honoured with an honorary doctorate,⁴⁰ published a compendium on the German [Protestant] Missions, he gave every classical mission a chapter of its own, but the Faith Missions were bundled into one, with the misleading heading 'Gemeinschaftsmissionen' (Missions of the Fellowship Movement). In spite of all these complaints the evangelical missions continued to remain on their own, do their own thing, and multiplied, if not so much before the Second World War, but then indeed after it.

Though the claim that unity promotes mission is repeated again and again, I do not see the evidence for that in history. In the last half century it has become obvious that the churches which emphasize (organic) unity are usually churches in decline, and that new advances in mission are usually made by those that are not united, at least not united organizationally. I am convinced that the evangelical concept of 'individual unity' comes closer to fulfilling Christ's prayer that all be one than the concept of 'organic unity'.

A cautious look at economics may support this idea. Communism tried to improve the economic well being of the poor by eliminating competition and duplication of effort. The result was exactly the opposite, but unfortunately

it took a long time to find this out, with great losses for the poor.

IV Evangelicals in the 'Broader Sense'

In my article I have concentrated on the Faith Missions as the 'organized' evangelicals. I think this is justified because it was a conference of the representatives of mission societies. Still, evangelicals in the broader sense must also be considered. Many of them were there, with a piety that comes from the Great Awakening (and sometimes with added Holiness aspects). It is impossible to count them, even to estimate, as evangelicals have a non-demarcated identity, so they can equally support the Faith Missions or the classical missions. But since the Conference was an organized event that proposed and took new organizational steps, what counts is not personal piety, but structural developments.

V Edinburgh 1910 and After

Latourette argues that ever new revivals give birth to ever new organizations. The classical missions, which had organized the Conference, all came from the Great Awakening, and they had made a tremendous contribution to the evangelization of the world, freeing Protestant Christianity from its European/American captivity. The evangelicals came from a different revival, the Second Great Awakening of 1858.⁴¹ In

⁴¹ Some of the missionaries (and more of the concepts) came from the Christian Brethren, who have their origin in the Restorationist Revival.

⁴⁰ *World Missionary Conference, 1910. The History and Records of the Conference*, 22.

Edinburgh the two children of revivals met. They recognized the same father, but it seems to me that the elder brother did not recognize that the little sister had a different mother.

In his opening speech at the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in 1974, Billy Graham, its organizer and moving spirit, called Edinburgh 1910 'the most historic conference on evangelism and missions' and identified two streams that came out of Edinburgh, due mainly to the shift from mission society to church.⁴² With due respect to Billy Graham, I see only one stream. Ten years before, the leadership of the New York World Missionary Conference had explicitly rejected the idea of establishing a Continuation Committee.

In Edinburgh, with its denominational bias, it was logical for Commission VIII to propose 'to perpetuate the idea and spirit of the Conference and embody it in such further practical action as should be found advisable'.⁴³ The Continuation Committee was not proposed by Commission I (Carrying the Gospel to all the Non-Christian World), but by Commission VIII (Coop-

eration and the Promotion of Unity). Thus Edinburgh 1910 was a major milestone in the transition from the Great Awakening to the World Council of Churches, pointing rather forward than backwards.

Of the 35 places on the Continuation Committee, the China Inland Mission was offered one. They did not accept the offer, and that virtually finished the participation of the evangelical missions in the stream that flowed from Edinburgh 1910 through the International Missionary Council to the World Council of Churches. The Evangelical [Faith] missions had been a new missionary movement, with its own (and separate) revival roots, its own spirituality and missionary concepts. Their central tenet was (individual) conversion, and their ecclesiology was based on that principle. Their concept of unity was individual, not sacramental. Right from the beginning they had their own separate identity, but this separate identity was, unlike that of the Fundamentalists, a *non demarcated* one.⁴⁴

The little sister from the later revival was there and played her role, fairly well in my opinion, but she had not come to stay, neither was she inclined to move into the same house with her big brother. She continued on her own way, without enmity and without separation. But her own way she continued to go.

The Faith Missions first organized their cooperative effort in America by

⁴² James Dixon Douglas, *Let the Earth Hear His Voice: Official Reference Volume, Papers and Responses* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1975), 26-27. For more details see Anne-Marie Kool, 'Changing Images in the Formation for Mission: Commission Five in Light of Current Challenges. A World Perspective', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 158-177 [162].

⁴³ 'It was felt that it would stamp an aspect of unreality upon the conference if it simply dissolved without an act of patent obedience to the heavenly vision it had seen' (*Report*, vol. 9, 26).

⁴⁴ This made it possible, to use later terminology, for one person to be evangelical and ecumenical at the same time, and that also made possible the participation in Edinburgh.

forming in 1917 the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association of North America (IFMA), followed by the founding of the Evangelical Fellowship of Mission Agencies (EFMA) in 1945. In Europe the process was slower. The Evangelical Missionary Alliance in UK was founded in 1958 and the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Evangelikaler Missionen [Fellowship of Evangelical Missions] in Germany in 1968. The Evangelicals in Europe had been going their own way(s) anyhow, and the decision of New Delhi 1961 to abandon the concept of the mission society and to leave the mission responsibility to churches that had other priorities than missions, seems to me to be the consequence of Edinburgh's turning away from its revival roots.

VI The Evangelical Turn

At Edinburgh 1910 there was (limited) cooperation between the mission movement that emanated from the Great Awakening and the Evangelical Movement that came two generations later. The unity that had become Edinburgh's aim excluded the Evangelicals.⁴⁵ I could not trace any evangelical mission represented in the process leading to the International Missionary Council in 1921. Equally I could not find a representative of any evangelical mission at the next world mission conference

⁴⁵ 'What is beyond doubt is that while Edinburgh 1910 has come to be regarded as a milestone in the development of unity in mission, it in fact led to a far more significant parting of ways in global mission.' (Rose Dowsett, 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: An Evangelical Perspective', 255).

Jerusalem 1928. In the delegates' list of Tambaram 1938 I identified three delegates from a Swedish mission in Inner Asia that may have been evangelicals. Evangelical non-participation was not a sign of protest; the evangelical missions were simply not there.

Between the two wars, the evangelical missions remained the minority, struggling to hold their own. This changed dramatically, starting from the 1950s. The classical missions, having overcome the setbacks of the war, continued to grow for a time. But their growth was soon eclipsed by the growth of the evangelical missions of various descriptions.⁴⁶

In the same period of the 1950s, the decline of the main-line denominations started in both Western Europe and North America. These churches talked much about mission, even 'Mission in Six Continents' (Mexico City, 1963). but they could rarely reach the ever increasing number of heathen in Europe or America. This decline was accompanied by a rise in 'liberal' theologies, and if it is difficult to prove that such theologies emptied the churches, it is easy to show that they did not fill them.⁴⁷ Post-Christian

⁴⁶ For statistics on the USA see Ralph D. Winter, 'The Twenty-Five Unbelievable Years, 1945-1969' in Kenneth Scott Latourette, *Advance through Storm. A.D. 1914 and After with Concluding Generalizations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 507-533 [527].

⁴⁷ Rudolf Bultmann designed his theology of demythologization as a missionary theology to attract 'modern man' to the Christian faith. But modern man rarely came. The same seems to be true of current 'inclusive' theologies of the Episcopal Church in the USA with regular negative growth rates.

Europe is quite resistant to evangelization, but what little progress is made in evangelizing heathen Europe must usually be credited to Evangelicals, Pentecostals and Charismatics.

That Edinburgh 1910 (gradually) abandoned the mission societies in favour of the churches, was accompanied by a (gradual) abandonment of the concept of missions (plural), replacing it by a concept of mission (singular).⁴⁸ The issue at stake was no longer the missions to the non-Christian world, but the 'mission of the church' and, as Stephen Neill once said, 'when everything is mission, nothing is mission.'⁴⁹

Edinburgh's aim was to promote the evangelization of the whole non-Christian world. The discussions at the Conference made many contributions to that. But the organizational energies of the Conference were scheduled not primarily to the task of missions (Commission One), but to the task of unity (Commission Eight). The argument was, of course, that unity promotes mission. While I can see that cooperation (of those willing and capable) promotes mission, unity (when used as a means of domination) does not. Unity at Edinburgh 1910 meant that, in order

to get the whole Church of England in, the Evangelical Faith Missions had to abandon their ecclesiology.

This meant that the goal of missions was no longer to save the lost (including those with a Christian name and a baptismal certificate), but to spread Christianity to those lost in non-Christian religions. By pushing the Evangelicals (gently) out, the missionary movement after 1910 (and later the Ecumenical Movement) cut itself off from probably the most forward moving missionary elements;⁵⁰ by rejecting the concept of the mission society, which had made the movement great, it blunted the prayed for advance.

Many of the great expectations of the Conference were not fulfilled. As the world plunged itself into two world wars in quick succession and Christianity plunged into the fourth recession, the missionary advance of the classical missions largely came to a halt. Classical missiologists often provided the rationale for the recession; one way was to replace 'missions' (in the plural: specific efforts to win non-Christians) by 'mission' (in the singular: 'the mission of the church'). The mission of the church (singular) is far more comprehensive but far less exciting.

It has been argued that over the next hundred years Christianity did not grow.⁵¹ The statistics are true, but the

⁴⁸ This is nicely expressed in one of the headings in Samuel Kobia's contribution to the Edinburgh 2010 volume: 'From the "Evangelization of the World in this Generation" to "This Generation's Mission in a Globalized World"', in Samuel Kobia, 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: A World Council of Churches Perspective', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 237-249 [248].

⁴⁹ Stephen Neill, *Creative Tension: The Duff Lectures, 1958* (Edinburgh House Press, 1959), 81.

⁵⁰ Edinburgh 1910 had not even realized that the Faith Missions were doing exactly that for the totally unreached third of (Inner) Africa.

⁵¹ Samuel Kobia, 'Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity: A World Council of Churches Perspective', in Kerr and Ross, *Edinburgh 2010*, 237-249 [245].

concept is wrong. Christianity grew tremendously, most strikingly in Africa. It was the spiritual darkness that engulfed much of the Global North that brought the numbers down to blot out the advances in the Global South.⁵² And the advances made in Africa were in the interior mostly the results of the work of the evangelical missions, and in the other two thirds of Africa, where the advance was mostly made by the classical missions, their character was more evangelical than in the Global North.

Edinburgh 1910 expected great advances in Eastern Asia. Advances were made there, but far less than hoped for, at least initially. And when finally the great advance was born during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, the baby looked much more evangelical than ecumenical. Not that the united Three Self Church did not grow, but its growth was eclipsed by that of the dis-united House Churches. Without overlooking the work of the Holy Spirit, I argue that diversity and evangelical piety promoted the expansion of the Christian faith in China far more than

unity and the concept of God's activity in the secular world.

At that time some classical missiologists even found themselves on the wrong side of the equation, arguing that God has set aside the churches in China (hopefully only for a time) so that he could work (more effectively) through the Cultural Revolution for the liberation of China's millions. A hundred years before Hudson Taylor had been convinced that China's millions should be liberated by faith in Jesus Christ.

VIII Conclusion

At Edinburgh 1910, elder brother and little sister met, recognized the same Father, but did not start living in the same house, and I am convinced that that was right. Big brother has grown older since, little sister has become a mature woman, and while growing they have met and should meet more often. Since then, two more sisters have been born, to the elder siblings' surprise. Let them all recognize each other, and together fulfil that great vision to reach the non-Christian world with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The geography has changed since 1910,⁵³ the task has not, and (too) much of it still needs to be done.

⁵² In the 'Edinburgh' part of the Global North (the Protestant countries dominated by the churches of the Reformation), the darkness grew faster and remained deeper than in the Roman Catholic sections of it. In the USA many mainline churches lost half of their members in half a century while evangelical churches frequently grew and the new Charismatic denominations flourished.

⁵³ For an excellent study of these changes, including all the numbers, see: Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (eds), *Atlas of Global Christianity 1910-2010* (Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

A Theological Critique of the Emerging, Postmodern Missional Church/movement

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KEYWORDS: *Contextualization, culture, evangelism, spirituality, paradox, praxis, consumerism, spiritual warfare*

I. Introduction

This paper presents a theological critique of the emerging movement (EM), which is understood as a conversation about how to contextualize the gospel for the emerging postmodern and post-colonial culture, and a call to action in this regard. It will be argued that EM makes important contributions to our ecclesiology, but that it is not without some concerns.

After defining EM, this critique focuses on three main issues. The first issue raised is EM's desire for cultural relevancy, with an evaluation of its approach to spirituality and engagement with culture. The second issue is the contention that our lives are the main medium through which the emerging culture will understand the message. Thirdly, the shift from

'church and mission' to 'missional church' will be considered. After reflecting on EM's relevance and application for ministry, it will be concluded that the movement's contribution to ecclesiology outweighs the concerns presented. Thus, the movement should be encouraged.

II. Defining the Emerging Movement

There is scholarly consensus that the western church is undergoing a massive paradigm shift in response to similar changes in culture. Discussions regarding the effects of postmodernity or postcolonialism¹ on the church have

¹ McLaren suggests 'postcolonialism' is a more helpful term than 'postmodernism'. B. McLaren, 'Church Emerging: Or Why I Still Use the Word Postmodern but with Mixed Feelings', in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, eds. D. Pagitt and T. Jones (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2007), 143 and 146.