The Interaction Between Missiology and Christology in Late
Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century British Theology
With Reference to the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference,
1910.

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Abstract

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The Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, 1910 has long been regarded as a central
event in the history of world missions. A great deal of christological debate had been
taking place in the decades prior to Edinburgh 1910. Theologians in Britain, North
America and on the continent of Europe had been subjecting the Bible and the person of
Christ to unprecedented historical and philosophical scrutiny. Developments within
science, particularly the influence of evolution, were used by theologians to explain the
action and influence of God in the world and this had profound implications for mission
theology since it impacted directly on the issues surrounding the revelation of God in
non-Christian faiths and the uniqueness and finality of Christ himself. Many missionaries
were falling under the influence of immanentist thought which was changing their own
understanding of the value and validity of non-Christian faiths. Fulfilment theology drew
on Hegelian influences and evolutionary concepts to construct a theory of religions
which viewed Christianity as the fulfilment of other world faiths.

In this thesis, Edinburgh 1910 is set in its immediate context, with particular reference to
the limits placed on its ability to consider christological developments. The implicit
theology of Edinburgh is examined in detail and the interaction between missiology and
christology as interdependent disciplines is traced from the Cambridge Platonists up to
the Conference. This demonstrates the long history of mutual influence between both
areas of theology and the inevitability that nineteenth century developments would both
challenge and provide innovative opportunities for their relationship. The philosophical
foundations of the two disciplines is discussed and the role of these philosophical
underpinnings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century developments is shown.
Each of the Edinburgh commissions is looked at in detail for its christological
significance in particular, but also for its wider theological importance and what this tells
the reader about the Conference's christological assumptions.

The christological contributions of missionaries themselves to the Conference are
contrasted with the inability of the organisers of the gathering to engage with the
christological issues which were clearly of enormous concern and importance to the
delegates and contributors. In engaging theologically with what has often been regarded
as an a-theological Conference, this thesis seeks to contribute to a wider understanding
of the rich interaction between christology and missiology at a watershed period in
missionary history.

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The governors and staff at Nether Kellet Community Primary School, Lancashire, have been incredibly supportive of my study and I want to say a special thank you to them.

Finally, I want to return to Melanie and Evie and dedicate all of my work to them. I love you both very much. Thank you!

Sean O'Callaghan
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Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to map out, analyse and explore the interaction and interplay between missiology and christology, primarily in the British theological context, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with particular reference to the role and impact of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in the development of missiological / theological praxis. I will look at christological themes in the conference as a whole and, in particular, at the work of Commission IV of that conference, the title of which commission was The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions, and the ways in which it built on the theology of missionaries in the mission field, expressed through their responses to the questionnaire distributed to missionaries worldwide in the period leading up to 1910. This will entail the placing of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 in its general and wider theological context. I will build on the work of Kenneth Cracknell, whose examination of the responses to Commission IV is the most comprehensive to date, but who deals mainly with Christian missiological attitudes towards non-Christian religions rather than the wider development of christology and missiology in mutual interaction.

In examining the relationship between missiology and theology in general, within the British milieu, I will pay closest attention to the developments within the field of christology. Prior to their responses to the questionnaire sent out by the commissioners of Commission IV of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910, many missionaries had already, as has been demonstrated by Kenneth Cracknell in his book *Justice, Courtesy and Love: Theologians and Missionaries Encountering World Religions, 1846–1914* (1995), been involved in developing their own missiology, sometimes with reference to theological developments at the home base and sometimes not. There is much creative, fresh expression and emergent theological reflection to be found in their own written works and in their contributions to Edinburgh. These contributions will be examined for the insights that they can provide into these new expressions and for the resonances they offer with wider theological trends of the time.

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Therefore, it will also be necessary in this thesis to trace the major developments in theology and missiology in the centuries preceding 1910, although the breadth of this will need to be limited for reasons of space. However, I will examine the issues of greatest importance in order to create the necessary context and background within which the work of the commissions of Edinburgh 1910 can be understood. As stated above, while I am analysing and tracing missiological and theological interaction, my intention is to place the emphasis, where it is possible to do so, on christological concerns. I add the caveat 'where it is possible' because missionaries were not necessarily developing a systematic theology, but were consciously exploring issues which were of immediate import to their ministries. As a result, some themes, christological and otherwise, are often implicit in their thinking, either as a result of given assumptions or because they are not fully developed, but are alluded to; or they provide embryonic insights into what were to emerge as later developments, such as those of Stanley Samartha and others who are developing new expressions of christology which have missiological foundations.[1] Samartha's *One Christ, Many Religions: Towards a Revised Christology* (1991) is a particular useful insight into how christology and missiology interact in fruitful cross-fertilisation. Also a source of insights is Kirsteen Kim's *Mission in the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Indian Christian Theologies* (2003), which examines the pneumatologies of Stanley Samartha, Sister Vandana and Samuel Rayan.

In my examination of the home-based theologies that have implications for missiology, it is necessary to point out that many home-based theologians were working on missiological themes while not functioning as missionaries themselves. Their thinking impacted on missionaries and provided many with the opportunity to develop novel ideas in the safety of knowing that they were able to do so within certain 'safe' boundaries, paralleling, as some of them were, home-based thinking, but then transforming and extending it within their own mission theology. There were also non-theological developments, such as those within the field of anthropology, which had major implications for theological reflection, as did new interpretations of history and the influence of Darwinian science (Hinchliff, 1992: 110, 111).[2]

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1. See Samartha, Stanley in *Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issues in Inter-Religious Relationships* (WCC Geneva, 1981).
2. See Hinchliff, Peter, *God and History: Aspects of British Theology, 1875–1914* (OUP Oxford, 1992): 103–11, for a fuller treatment of Darwinian influence.

There are, then, a myriad of influences at work on the missionaries who found themselves engaged in their missionary activity at a period of profound change, not only in the physical world, but in the religious and spiritual realms as well. These men and women were the representatives of a Western world which was undergoing revolutionary change, and, although many of them were based amongst people groups in the furthest corners of the globe, their theologies could not escape the challenges and influences of the momentous developments going on around them. The Edinburgh World Missionary Conference took place against such a background and following a period of unprecedented change. It also took place against the backdrop of a worldwide missionary movement that was imbued with optimism, with faith in the role of progress and with the expectation of the evangelisation of the world in its own time. However, as in our own time with the rise of postmodernism and its challenge to the old paradigm of modernist thinking, the missionary world was in a situation that was unfolding more quickly and with greater challenges than it had perhaps anticipated (Bosch, 1991:8).

An orthodox, evangelical and, in many cases, mono-faceted approach to the non-Christian world was undergoing deep structural change, which resulted in many of the certainties of the missionary movement prior to 1910 being confronted in a 'new' world which was not as amenable to a Christ who had but one Western face and one approach to truth. The debates that followed resulted in a revaluation of many of the old certainties.

The most immediate insight into and consideration of the work of Commission IV in its own contemporary milieu was *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference* (1910), written by W. H. T. Gairdner very shortly after the conference itself. Indeed, Gairdner's account and interpretation was written with such alacrity that the second edition of the volume notes that the reprint allowed the publishers to "correct some mistakes that passed unnoticed in the First Edition in consequence of the haste with which the volume was printed" (Gairdner, 1910: vi). Kenneth Cracknell regards the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference as having been the showcase for a new way of thinking in missionary circles, most especially demonstrated in the report of Commission IV which signalled, in his view, a significant

change of perception with reference to non-Christian religions and fresh answers as to the significance of non-Christian faiths within the purposes of God (Cracknell, 1995: 1).

The Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 was just one in a long line of similar general conferences. There had been a conference at New York in 1854, Liverpool in 1860, London in both 1878 and 1888 and New York again in 1900. Faced with the choice of being both "deliberative and consultative" or of being a way to present mission to the general public, the organisers of Edinburgh 1910 chose to opt for deliberation and consultation, in contrast to the New York conference of 1900.

While being both deliberative and consultative, though, Edinburgh 1910 is generally regarded as being an event at which theology took a back seat. Brian Stanley explains some of the background to this in his 'Defining the boundaries of Christendom: The two worlds of the World Missionary Conference 1910'[3] and, in doing so, claims that even though theological discussions along certain lines were to be excluded from the scope of the conference, the very exclusion of these topics demonstrated a commitment to a certain theological world-view *vis-à-vis* the relationship between 'Christendom' and 'heathendom' and the relationships between the historic Anglican, Orthodox, Oriental and Roman Catholic Churches (Stanley, 2006: 171ff). This situation will be dealt with more fully below, in which greater discussion will be given to the securing of an agreement from high-church Anglicans to take part in the conference, on condition that matters of "Faith and Order" would not be discussed.

Roger E. Hedlund – a missionary writer, lecturer and founder of the CGRC McGavran Institute in Madras, India – asks:

> Was Edinburgh 1910 devoid of theology? 'Faith and Order' questions, we have noted, were excluded. Reports, even the one on 'The Missionary Message', were not theological. It would be an error, however, to assume that the conference was a-theological. A consensus was assumed on essentials – they accepted one another's confession of Christ. Also we should remember that 'the World Missionary Conference of 1910 did not require any elaborate justification for missions'. Yet in the very assumptions about world evangelism there was a great deal of unexpressed theology. God's offer of salvation, the Christian missionary duty, the world's need of Christ – these are profound and fundamental theological themes. (Hedlund 1993: 23)

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3. Published in the October 2006 edition of the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*.

It has, however, become something of a dictum within missiological circles to believe that, because theological discussion was outside the parameters of Edinburgh, Edinburgh was either a-theological or close to it. Stephen Neill writes, "There had been little discussion of theology at the Edinburgh conference of 1910. There had seemed to be little need for it, when all were at one on the fundamentals" (Neill, 1965: 454). Andrew Walls writes of the "price to pay to achieve consensus. A self-denying ordinance was accepted by delegates not to raise 'any matter of faith or policy on which those participating in the conference differ among themselves' " (Walls, 2002: 57). Paul Hedges notes that "One of the precepts of the conference was that it was not to discuss theological questions. It is probably for this reason that we get no clear account as to whether the non-Christian religions are purely products of the human mind or whether they are divinely inspired" (Hedges, 2001: 245). Martin Maw points out "A British adviser noted that the avoidance of doctrinal controversy would swell attendance" (Maw, 1990: 329). Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill explain the ramifications of the decision to exclude matters of 'faith and order', which essentially meant theological issues, "At Edinburgh Anglo-Catholics came and took an active part. Their considerable hesitations were overcome only by the assurance that questions of faith and order would not be brought before the conference. They had felt that they could come only if it was recognized that they must not be asked to compromise convictions which to them were of major importance" (Rouse and Neill, 1967: 360). These authors go on to cite the example of Bishop Charles H. Brent, Bishop for the Philippines of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA, who objected strongly to the conference about the decision to exclude such topics and "felt that by its self-denying ordinance, which forbade discussion of differences of opinion in doctrine and ecclesiastical structure and practice, the gathering was failing to face some of the basic issues confronting Christians" (ibid.). Brent went on to found the World Conference on Faith and Order (ibid.).

I will argue that to make the assumption that theology was absent at Edinburgh is to assume that the overt attempt to smooth the path for consensus amongst many different groupings was a successful, though pragmatic, self-deception. The presence of both formidable academic theologians (of which there were many, David Smith Cairns, the Chairman of Commission IV not least amongst them) and those who were hammering

out theology on the anvil of mission-field experience belies an absence of theology. Undoubtedly there existed a sort of 'gentlemen's agreement' to not discuss matters that might prove divisive, but neither delegates to the conference, nor the organisers and luminaries could be considered theological *tabulae rasae*, working, as they were, in a field and in disciplines that were vitally connected to the theological developments of the age. The responses to the questionnaires sent out by Commission IV are filled with both explicit and implicit theology, christology and pneumatology, not to mention anthropology and several other areas of concern, which will be discussed. Those tasked with the organisation of the conference itself were, in many cases, very competent theologians themselves and, if not academic theologians, were certainly figures who were familiar with the theological debates of the day. Edinburgh 1910, then, took place at the crossroads of a number of theological paths and in this thesis I will trace the trajectory of some of these paths on the road to Edinburgh, but I will also examine in some detail the ideas emerging from the responses to the conference, particularly to Commission IV, and their relationship to the wider debates of the period.

It will be necessary, before dealing with theological analysis, to give an historical survey for both missiology and christology up to 1910. I intend to do this mainly from about 1840. My reason for this is to encompass the period in which the influence of F. D. Maurice, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Bishop Westcott and the *Lux Mundi* school was in its ascendancy. With the publication of *Lux Mundi* in 1889, many streams of thought that had both missiological and christological import were harnessed to produce a volume that was to have considerable impact. However, in order to provide the necessary ambit, I will consider, in some detail, seventeenth – and eighteenth-century developments which influenced nineteenth-century theology, as the many christological and missiological themes emerging from the conference have very definite roots in Enlightenment and nineteenth-century thinking.

Literature Overview

My purpose in this thesis is, therefore, two-fold. First I intend to examine the overall theology of Edinburgh 1910 as a whole. Previous work on the conference has tended to focus largely on the issues of mission strategy and attitudes towards non-Christian faiths. There has been very little attempt to engage with the implicit theology of the event itself and to place it in a wider theological context *vis-à-vis* its theological assumptions. The

conference has been considered as a 'deliberative and consultative' gathering, with no essential theological character. Most work on Edinburgh 1910 has concentrated almost exclusively on Commission IV. In this thesis, however, I will analyse the theology expressed in each of the commissions and attempt an overview of the theology of the conference as a whole. This has not been done before in any depth. I will also examine the christology and christological assumptions that arise from the discussions and deliberations of the conference. Again, this has not been done with the whole corpus of the conference's proceedings.

Most work on christological matters has been confined to Commission IV. I will show that the decision to exclude matters on faith and order, which had, in turn, the effect of excluding theological debate, was a crucial oversight in terms of the missionary movement as a whole, which had developed its theological approaches in the milieu of christological exploration, experimentation and re-evaluation. From the Cambridge Platonists and right through the Enlightenment period, the philosophical, theological and cosmological scenes were being set for a very strong and definite engagement with missiological concerns, arising particularly out of a world which found itself in rapid flux, owing to developments within the fields of history and science in particular. Kant, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Herder and others laid the philosophical foundations and underpinnings for a theology of religions, which was to emerge in its most definite and concrete form from about 1840 onwards. F. D. Maurice, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Bishop Westcott, Charles Gore and other luminaries of the nineteenth-century theological world were to apply their minds to the question of the relationship between Christianity and the non-Christian faiths, and to the role and relevance of the question of Christ:

> Traditional theology and christology had operated with the concept of original sin that went back at least to Augustine in the fourth century. Now, in the wake of the Enlightenment, the whole idea of human nature corrupted by sin was vigorously opposed ... A host of traditional Christian, especially christological, doctrines came to be reconsidered and reshaped in light of this new outlook ... not only Christianity but also other religions came under the scrutiny of this new independent reason. Of all the tenets of Christian faith, this kind of radical shift most immediately affected christology. (Kärkkäinen, 2003: 92)

The most important work in recent years on the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference has been that of Kenneth Cracknell, *Justice, Courtesy and Love: Theologians and*

Missionaries Encountering World Religions, 1846–1914 (1995). Cracknell engages with the theology behind the figures who contributed to Commission IV of the conference and gives a comprehensive background to the development of changing attitudes towards those in other faiths. However, while dealing with christological issues with regards to Commission IV, Cracknell's book is weighted in emphasis on attitudes towards non-Christian faiths on the part of missionaries. It does not attempt any overview of the conference as a whole, but is strictly confined to Commission IV. Neither does it offer any in-depth philosophical analysis of the eighteenth – and nineteenth-century underpinnings of the missiological movement. It does not, in any depth, deal with the planning and preparation for the conference as a whole, and its scope, while covering a very wide range of issues in connection with Commission IV, is limited to that commission itself.

Paul Hedges' *Preparation and Fulfilment: A History of Fulfilment Theology in Modern British Thought in the Indian Context* (2001) also deals with Edinburgh 1910, but from a very particular angle, that of fulfilment theory. Hedges focuses primarily on the thought and theology of John Nichol Farquhar, but in doing so he touches on many of the issues discussed in this thesis, such as Logos theology, the role of evolutionary theory and fulfilment theologians prior to and contemporaneous with Farquhar. Hedges deals with Edinburgh 1910's attitudes towards fulfilment theology and, again, focuses only on Commission IV. However, his work does deal with theological and, to some extent, christological issues.

Martin Maw's *Visions of India: Fulfilment Theology, the Aryan Race Theory, and the Work of British Protestant Missionaries in Victorian India* (1990) looks in depth at two of the figures whom I will examine in this thesis, Bishop Brooke Foss Westcott and Max Müller. Like Hedges, he deals with the issue of Logos theology in some depth and also Alexandrian and Platonic influences on the missionary movement, but again, like Hedges, his primary focus is on fulfilment theology and his analysis of Edinburgh 1910 is based on Commission IV.

Eric Sharpe has written two books that deal with the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in some depth, *Not to Destroy but to Fulfil: The Contribution of J. N. Farquhar to Protestant Missionary Thought in India before 1914* (1965), and *Faith meets Faith* (1977). Sharpe,

again, is mainly concerned with the work of J. N. Farquhar, but he does give some considerable attention to Edinburgh 1910, chiefly Commission IV. He looks in particular at the interaction between two of the most influential figures at Edinburgh, A. G. Hogg and D. S. Cairns. Sharpe analyses Commission IV, fulfilment theory and Hindu–Christian relations from a theological standpoint, and gives a very useful insight into the characters and debates. His book *Faith Meets Faith: Some Christian Attitudes to Hinduism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (1977) focuses chiefly on Hindu–Christian relations, but again deals in some detail with Commission IV. However, much of the material is repeated from the 1965 book. His first chapter gives a useful and compact overview of the background involving Maurice and Coleridge. Sharpe has also written a work on *The Theology of Hogg* (1971), which deals with the theological development of a major contributor to Edinburgh 1910.

William Richey Hogg's *Ecumenical Foundations: A History of the International Missionary Council and its Nineteenth-Century Background* (1952) is a very comprehensive treatment of the origins and background of the conference. It gives little information, however, about the work of each commission. Moreover, it attempts no theological engagement at all with the conference and confines itself to outlining, although in some detail, the factors involved in setting up the conference and the activities of its primary figures. Neither does it attempt to place the conference in any kind of theological context.

Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill also deal with the background to the conference in some depth in their *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517–1948* (1954). Like Hogg's book, this gives some very useful background to the setting up of Edinburgh 1910 and the controversy surrounding some of the issues involved in organising it, but there is again no attempt to engage theologically with the material and no analysis of the debates, apart from cursory descriptions of the activities.

The earliest account of the conference, apart from the commission documents and *The History and Records of the Conference*, Vol. IX, is the account written by W. H. T. Gairdner, *Edinburgh 1910: An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference* (1910). Gairdner gives a detailed, but somewhat hagiographical and flowery eye-witness account of the proceedings at Edinburgh. The reporting is factual, with no analysis or critical engagement with the material.

J. Stanley Freisen's *Missionary Responses to Tribal Religions at Edinburgh, 1910* (1996) sets out five models of "how missionaries surveyed for the 'Animistic Religions' report conceived of the relationship of Christianity to tribal religions based upon their theological and ethical positions" (Freisen, 1996: x). Freisen surveys the various interpretations of Edinburgh, and then analyses the responses from the correspondents to the conference from areas where animistic religions were thought to proliferate. Freisen deals with the 'African question' at the conference in some detail and the responses, which he analyses, are all from Commission IV. His work is a valuable contribution on anthropological perspectives that informed the report on animistic religions. He deals virtually not at all with the historical setting of the gathering, although he does deal in some detail with aspects of British and American missiology in their approach to African society. His main focus is on an anthropological interpretation of Edinburgh 1910 through an analysis of a selection of responses to Commission IV. There is no emphasis on christology and no attempt to provide a wider theological view of, or context for, the conference.

My own thesis, then, will engage with a wider field than have the above. I intend to subject the proceedings of the entire conference to a theological analysis with the particular intention of discerning christological trends and themes therein. I will then put the theology of the conference as a whole, and those christological trends and themes, in a much wider historical context by viewing them in the light of relevant christological and theological developments in the history of missiological thought from the Cambridge Platonists onwards. In doing so, I will show the interaction and interplay between christology and missiology prior to 1910. I will then look at the christology that emerges in 1910, from the conference as a whole, but also from Commission IV, which must still be regarded as the most theological of all the commissions, and will argue that the decision to exclude debate on theological matters particularly affected christology, since it was within this realm that many missionaries, certainly many of those who contributed to the conference, were producing an innovative and fresh interaction between missiology and christology through a synthesis of modern scientific trends, such as evolution and historical method, with Alexandrian christology. Since the interface between christology and missiology was at its most fertile in the decades immediately prior to Edinburgh, the lack of opportunity to debate and discuss the most important theological and doctrinal issues of the day represented a triumph of short-term pragmatism over real engagement

with one crucial factor which was at the very centre of the Christian–non-Christian debate: the issue of the role, relevance, uniqueness and finality of the Person of Christ.

Methodology

This thesis is primarily a work of historical theology. I have sought to trace the history of the interaction between both christology and missiology, with my main focus being on the impact of that interaction in British theology of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This has involved an examination of the historical trends within both christology and missiology from the period of the Cambridge Platonists up to the publication of *Lux Mundi* (1889), and a discussion of the interaction and interdependency of both fields in the decades prior to Edinburgh 1910. I then examine the role of the World Missionary Conference in christological and missiological context. To do this, I have consulted a number of historical archive sources. Copies of the Commission IV responses to the questionnaire sent out to missionaries are kept at the University of Aberdeen, and also at the Henry Martyn Centre, Westminster College, Cambridge, and I have made extensive use not only of the source material from the responses themselves, but also related documents held with them. In Cambridge these consist of extracts from the writings of various missionary authors. The papers of David Cairns, held at Aberdeen, have also been very useful for general background, but many of his papers have been lost or destroyed. I have also made use of the books, articles, missionary journals and copies of the Commission IV responses held by the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the non-Western World, at the University of Edinburgh. The archives of the Student Christian Movement are held at the University of Birmingham, and these have provided very useful background to the many debates between the Anglican Church and the organisers of Edinburgh 1910.

Chapter 1

The significance of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 in its Contemporary Setting and the Limiting of its Theological Parameters

Setting the boundaries: theological parameters of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference

I will begin by setting out the circumstances of the conference of Edinburgh 1910 in order to set it as the central focus from which I will then branch out, thereby establishing its role in the fuller christological and theological framework. It will be necessary to deal with the gathering in some detail at this point, with particular reference to the mechanics of the conference and its historical significance. Although I will deal with a number of theological issues in this section, the main theological analysis will occur later on in the thesis. In subsequent chapters I will trace the evolution of both missiology and christology in antecedent missionary thought, but for the purposes of this chapter I wish to concentrate chiefly on the relevant events of 1900 to 1910, whilst giving some brief historical background with regards to the dates and character of some prior missionary conferences.

The rapid rise of missionary societies between 1792 and 1842, and beyond, is indicative not only of a resurgence of evangelical and evangelistic fervour and devotion, but also of a pre-occupation in many quarters with end times. During this period, we see the foundation of major mission societies — such as the Baptist Missionary Society, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society — in Britain and a host of similar societies in the United States and Europe. Kenneth Cracknell, in his comprehensive treatment of mission theology in this period, attributes this rapid rise to a number of reasons, the most powerful probably being the emergence of millennialism and pre-millenialism; both stressed the imminent return of Christ and both provoked a response in many believers, which manifested itself in a strong desire to see the non-Christian nations of the world converted to the Christian message (Cracknell, 1995: 4–14). The influence of Pietism and Moravianism joined with the impact of the Great Awakening in the United States to bring about a long period of revivalism, which was manifested most keenly in Britain by the Methodist revival. This confluence of dynamic

movements conspired to create the conditions for a high-tension and progressively more urgent approach towards the salvation of the lost before the Second Coming of Christ (ibid: 27–31).

Millennialist fervour was not alone in being the catalyst for a missionary expansion. The new rationalism, which was establishing itself in Europe and America, also played a part. Rationalism would have a role in convincing non-Christians of the reasonableness of the Christian faith over and above other faith systems. Another factor was the decline in influence of hyper-Calvinism which, while still strong, had nevertheless lost its widespread impact and opened the way for a greater understanding of and willingness to accept the validity of the work of God amongst the unevangelised (ibid: 20–26). Calvinism found itself challenged on many fronts by revivalism and its insistence on the possibility of the free decision of those who heard the Gospel to accept Christ. The emphasis on individual conversion, stressed by Pietism and mediated to Wesley through the Moravian Count Von Zinzendorf, led also to a new concern for the individual and the love of God (ibid: 27, 28). It was within this context, at the point of interface between the model of the rejectionist stance towards non-Christian faiths and the emerging model of engagement and understanding, that Logos theology began itself to emerge as a model, largely re-discovered from the early church and readily suited to building a new paradigm within which a fresh approach to non-Christian faiths could be developed. Hence the appeal to both Justin Martyr and Clement of Alexandria, with the former's view of paganism as "a mixture of gloom and vice" but also containing within it "discernible streaks of light" as a basis for a policy of engagement and dialogue rather than exclusivist rejection. The latter spoke of "gleams of truth which the Christian Church ought to be ready to accept as evidence of the diffused energy of the divine Logos" (Yates, 1994: 95, 96).

Timothy Yates makes the point, in his *Christian Mission in the Twentieth Century* (1994), that the main characteristic of mission itself in the period leading up to 1910 could be summed up by the term 'expansion'. The expansionist approach to mission was strongly evidenced at the 1900 New York Ecumenical Missionary Conference, which was attended by about 200,000 people (ibid: 9).

The robust nature of North American Christianity found itself rooted in its Puritan heritage, with the emphasis on a divine mandate to realise the Kingdom of God in an earthly setting. The relationship between the religion and society is a paramount feature of Puritan theological and, in particular, missiological thinking at this time. It was not in the nature of religion of this period to confine itself to the ecclesiastical realm and mission, as a result, found it nigh impossible to separate its Godly concerns from its political, particularly in the case of the British Empire (ibid: 8–12; Cracknell, 1995: 3-34). The Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, then, would not be able to confine itself merely to matters of church planting and church growth, but it was intimately concerned with the geo-political trends of the day.

Both William Richey Hogg, writing in 1952, and Paul Hedges, writing much more recently in 2000, make the point that Edinburgh did not significantly differ from previous conferences in terms of the issues that concerned it. Hogg claims for Edinburgh that its genius lay in the way in which it functioned as a lens "catching diffused beams of light from a century's attempts at missionary co-operation, focusing them, and projecting them for the future in a unified, meaningful, and determinative pattern" (Hogg, 1952: 98). Hedges, while noting a more conciliatory note in many of the contributions to Edinburgh, nevertheless concludes that nothing was said which was either "new or original" (Hedges, 2000: 271). Therefore, it could be argued that Edinburgh represents a link with continuity, a continuity which gives to Edinburgh even greater significance because it has the benefit of accrued wisdom and deliberation behind it. I will attempt in this thesis to place Edinburgh in the context of this continuous evolution of missionary praxis and to do so with particular regard to its importance in inheriting the accumulated result and outcomes of many decades of christological debate. I will examine the place of Edinburgh 1910 as the receptor of this inheritance and will argue that, while the conference was in the peculiar position of being an event and a forum where the fruit of christology was in abundance, with each grouping coming with its own christological givens and assumptions, the fact that doctrine was not up for discussion meant that christological streams had nowhere into which they could flow, be pooled and harnessed. Having given an overview of the conference, I will trace the interplay and interaction between missiology and christology in the nineteenth century and will then examine in more detail the debates at, and contributions to, Edinburgh to give a picture of the outworking of what were often implicit rather than explicit christological views.

The proceedings of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference were published shortly after the event in a series of nine volumes. The ninth volume is entitled *The History and Records of the Conference together with Addresses delivered at the Evening Meetings* (WMC IX). Part One of the volume is devoted to a history of the conference, with emphasis on the preparation. It was written by George Robson, a member of Commission I of the conference, which commission was concerned with the subject Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World.. In 1906, J. Fairley Daly, the Honorary Secretary of the Livingstonia Mission of the United Free Church of Scotland, corresponded with Robert Speer, the Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions in New York, and in the course of this correspondence he enquired whether the mission boards in the United States had decided on any course of action with regards to another conference. Having discussed the matter with his colleagues in the United States, Speer replied that he and they were very interested in taking part in a missionary conference, and he proposed that this be held in Great Britain in 1910 (WMC IX: 6). As a result, following a meeting held in Edinburgh on 29 January 1907, it was decided that a missionary conference should be held in Edinburgh in June 1910

Edinburgh was to be a reflective assembly and its principal focus was to be "consultation", a focus urged upon it by both the British and American executives independently of each other. It was at this point that certain parameters were set, which were to have repercussions for the outcomes of the conference, although at the time these would have been seen as both sensible and pragmatic. Firstly, the issue of missionary work among non-Christian peoples, rather than in nations with Christian populations, was to be the focus of the conference and this, Robson explains, was because it was work in which all parties to the conference could be united. His statement to this effect hides a somewhat more complex explanation, as will become clear. Secondly, the scope of discussion would have to be confined to what were considered to be the most urgent issues facing the missionary movement. Finally, and most importantly for the purposes of this thesis, "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 differed among themselves" (ibid: 8).

This was to ignore, of course, the inevitable fact that doctrinal issues would still be the driving force behind contributions, opinions and stances and that Edinburgh 1910, whether the organisers liked it or not, would still stand at the confluence of many and varied streams of theological thought and analysis. The opinion of William Richey Hogg regarding Edinburgh as a "lens" through which diffused rays of light would be projected into the future (Hogg, 1952: 98) is certainly a valid one in many respects, especially with regards to issues of missionary co-operation and attitudes towards other faiths, but attempts at Edinburgh to achieve an easy consensus and safe accommodation with regards to doctrine meant that at a crucial period, following decades of debate and new thinking with regards to the subject of the uniqueness, finality and particularity of Christ and of Christian doctrine, and at a time, as will be evidenced elsewhere in this discussion, when missionary thinkers were radically reassessing the role of Christ and of Christianity in soteriological contexts, certain rays of light were blocked or deflected.

Brian Stanley has given a more detailed account of the background debates surrounding the parameters set on the conference. Stanley makes the point that its organisers eschewed the term 'ecumenical' in the title of the conference in favour of the term 'world', in order to avoid the connotations that the word 'ecumenical' had acquired, a meaning cognate with the modern understanding of the word and a meaning which was later to define and characterise Edinburgh 1910. In spite of the fact that Edinburgh was originally conceived of as a conference for the whole world, in practice its scope was limited to missionary societies which evangelised the non-Christian peoples of the world. If a society worked in a country which professed itself to be Christian, then only that proportion of its expenditure that it spent on evangelising non-Christians could be taken into account for the purposes of representation. In 1908, the inaugural American meeting of those involved in overseeing Commission I, the topic of which was at the time envisaged as being "Carrying the Gospel to All the World" and which was later amended to "Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World", moved that the subcommittee that it had appointed to compile statistics on missionary endeavour should exclude from its purview any missionary work carried on in the continent of Europe, excepting the area covered by the Turkish Empire and south-eastern Europe. The idea of Europe being Christian territory was a tacit and implicit assumption, leading Stanley to make the point that "the conference was not to be about mission to the *world* but about mission from 'Christendom' to 'heathendom' "(Stanley, 2006: 171).

Key to decisions concerning the parameters of Edinburgh was the role of the Anglican Church. Full Anglican participation in the conference was the golden prize most coveted by the organisers of the conference (ibid.). High Anglicans, in particular, had remained at arm's length from interdenominational events espoused by proponents of mission. The Student Movement (SCM), which will be dealt with in more detail elsewhere, was fundamental in securing the co-operation of the Church of England. In 1907, Bishop H. H. Montgomery, the General Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG), which was generally regarded as a 'high-church' Anglican missionary enterprise, was appointed to the Preparatory Committee for the Edinburgh conference. Internal Church politics dictated that it took until 1909 before he was able to play a role, owing to SPG debates as to whether or not it could participate. Although Montgomery himself had attended meetings of the Student Volunteer conferences in a personal capacity, the SPG had not been officially represented. It was through Montgomery's affection for and interest in the Student Volunteer Missionary Union (SVMU) that the SPG eventually played a role in the Liverpool Student Volunteer Missionary Union Conference of 1908, at the instigation of the student leader, Tissington Tatlow of the SCM. George Robson then went on to communicate with Tatlow, urging him also to join the International Committee and to bring with him the support of the Church of England.

Tatlow was instrumental in persuading a number of reluctant high-church men to agree to co-operate with Edinburgh. It was he who tried to put together a representative group of Anglicans for service on the various commissions, including Charles Gore, the Bishop of Birmingham, E. S. Talbot, the Bishop of Southwark, Herbert Kelly, the Director of Kelham College, and Walter Frere, the Superior of the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield. Oldham scored quite a coup in securing the participation of Gore. However, the cost of this would be a cast-iron assurance that questions of doctrine and church order with regards to matters on which the churches or societies differed amongst themselves would in no way come under the remit of the conference (ibid.). Matters of faith and order were, therefore, to be neither presented for discussion, nor discussed. The securing of Gore, in spite of this restriction, was a major success as he enjoyed great influence and importance, and his involvement was to be a key factor in encouraging other members of the Anglican Communion to take part. The Pan-Anglican Congress, which met in London in June 1908, where the Church in foreign parts was discussed in

some of the sessions, further increased interest in and knowledge about the Edinburgh World Missionary conference (ibid.). However, the tone of the congress with regards to co-operation in missions and concerns about credal issues at the Shanghai Missionary Conference of 1907 was negative and discouraging (Hogg 1952: 113).

At a meeting of the British Advisory Council on Commission I in February 1909, Anglican Bishop H. H. Montgomery, Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, queried John R. Mott's desire to have the subcommittee on statistics, headed by James S. Dennis, include South America, Palestine, Syria and Turkey as Protestant mission fields. Mott was the Chair of the American Commission I Executive and he had sent a letter to the Vice-Chair of the parallel British Executive, Rev. George Robson, with the proposal that the regions mentioned above be included in statistical surveys, maps and charts. Montgomery was concerned at the idea that areas covered by the Roman Catholic and Greek churches would be considered as fields in need of Protestant missionary activity. Montgomery went on to voice his concerns to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, and to the Bishop of Southwark, Edward Talbot (Stanley, 2006: 172–3).[4]

Montgomery's concerns were theological, but tinged with both church and geographical politics. He was faced with the task of having to define the boundaries of Christendom and of having to deal with the soteriologial and ecclesiological ramifications of regarding Roman Catholics and Assyrian Christians as not fully evangelised and functioning members of the universal Church. To underline his own views and to demonstrate the importance of this point to the Anglican Church, Montgomery threatened either the partial or full withdrawal of the Anglican representatives from the conference (ibid: 173).

Following discussions, both Robson and Oldham, the Secretary of the conference, supposed that – once a distinction had been made in the final statistics between missionary work in non-Christian contexts and that carried on among Roman Catholics and those who belonged to the churches of the Eastern rites – accommodation could be made with the Anglican hierarchy. Robson set in motion arrangements for this to happen. This did not satisfy the hierarchy, however, which issued an ultimatum insisting

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4. Brian Stanley also thinks that Montgomery would have shared his concerns with Charles Gore, who was to go on to play a major role at the conference.

that the conference deal solely with the efforts made by Christians to evangelise non-Christians. In a partial attempt to meet the problem – the seriousness of which he did not fully appreciate – at least half-way, Oldham offered the compromise that mission aimed at Catholic peoples in Europe would be excluded from the statistics, but made the point that he felt the issue of mission to Latin America should still be able to be included in the numbers since Christianity in that region was largely 'nominal'. In response, Gore demanded that all mission to Catholics be excluded; Gore then withdrew from his role as Chairman of Commission III on Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life.

Facing the momentous and disastrous loss of Anglican support and participation, and with the prospects of losing a significant number of leading figures within the commissions, any form of evangelisation that would centre on conversion from one version of Christianity to another was excluded from the scope of the conference, on the instructions of Oldham. Gore resumed his Chairmanship of Commission III (ibid: 172). Oldham was able to report back to John R. Mott, the American chairman of Commission I, that the Anglicans would remain on board if all references to missionary work among Roman Catholic and other Christian communions could be excluded from the work of the conference and if "no surrender of conscientious conviction" be asked of any participant, a reference designed to exclude any doctrinal debate (ibid.). Mott continued to be concerned at the exclusion of fields which he was convinced were only nominally Christian. The Americans reluctantly agreed to the British proposals in the interests of pragmatism and of saving the conference from Anglican withdrawal. In an exercise of damage limitation, especially with regards to the American public and their possible reaction to discovering that large areas of American mission fields were now to be excluded from discussion, the decision was made that the title of Commission I be amended to "Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World" rather than "to All the World". It would be left to the British contingent to decide what the exclusions and inclusions should be with regards to the statistics themselves.

The Americans wanted clarification on two matters in particular: They needed guidance on the percentage of Christians, be they Protestant, Roman Catholic or Oriental, that would need to be present in a country to change its status from non-Christian to Christian; and they wanted to know whether Persia, Turkey, Syria and Egypt would have

all their statistics included, seeing that the main aim of missionaries in these countries was to reach the non-Christian population (ibid: 173). The British responded by proposing that missions to Jews be included, but compiled separately and that statistics for Catholic and Orthodox missions would be compiled separately as well. An unusual solution was found for the cases of the Turkish Empire, Persia and Egypt, whereby the statistics for all Protestant missionaries would be included, because of their work amongst the Muslim populations, but statistics for the Protestant members converted by those same missionaries would not be included because it was considered that those converts had come mainly from the Oriental churches (ibid.). All work in Latin America was excluded, except for work being done with aboriginal tribes and immigrants to the region who were non-Christians themselves. Mission to African-Americans in North and South America, as well as in the West Indies was excluded as these were now thought of as being part of Christendom. Again, work with immigrants was included. Other nations, such as Madagascar, Portuguese India and Africa were deemed to have Roman Catholic or other Christian communities in sufficiently small numbers to be included in the statistics(ibid: 173, 174). However, no definitive answer was formulated as to what proportion of a country's population would need to be Christian, or otherwise, for it to be included in either category of Christian or non-Christian (ibid: 174).

Stanley recognises the theological implications of the distinctions made. The evangelicals held steadfast to their belief that their missionary work in Latin America, the Caribbean and even Europe was valid and worthwhile. Oldham knew that he had made a theological concession because he was aware that, having agreed with the Anglicans that no-one be asked to surrender a conviction, the decision to exclude large swathes of the territories of the world was a surrender on the part of the evangelical theological outlook before the high Anglican position (ibid: 174). In the end, Oldham had secured the agreement of the Anglicans to remain on board and he had furthermore gained the agreement, although late in the day, of the Archbishop of Canterbury to address the opening session of the conference.[5]

The SPG agreed to take part following initial reluctance, and the success of Tatlow in persuading the society to send delegates to the interdenominational Liverpool conference

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5. The conference opened in June 1910, but the archbishop did not commit himself until mid-April.

was a great aid in their decision to do so and in the Archbishop's decision to support this. The Anglicans were on board, but with a certain amount of trepidation. Nevertheless, the Archbishop was moved to say that "It will be by far the greatest and most important missionary conference that has ever taken place" (Hogg, 1952: 114).

The Americans proposed that the business of the conference be carried out through the compilation of detailed and "masterly" reports, which would be composed well in advance of the conference by separate commissions dealing with a variety of different topics. Each commission report would then be published before the conference itself began, with a view to the material being discussed each day at the conference. Eight subjects were chosen, then, for deliberation and each commission would consist of twenty members, under the guidance of a chairman who would have the final say on any matter. It was decided that where a chairman was appointed, the other members of the commission who lived in the same country as the chairman would form the executive of that particular commission, and the vice-chairman would be chosen from the other side of the Atlantic, the members of the commission living there forming, with the vice-chair, an advisory council (WMC IX, 1910: 10). As the commission members would have to meet regularly, it would be difficult for serving missionaries to form part of the complement, but every commission had on it members who had wide missionary experience. Each commission, as part of its task to compile a report, once it had decided upon a line of enquiry drew up a series of questions, which were then sent to missionaries world-wide. These missionaries would have been recommended by their own missionary societies as suitable respondents. The replies sent to these questions largely astounded the members of the commissions in the breadth and quality of their reflection and valuable insights into missionary thinking. In a later chapter, I will be examining in some detail the replies sent to the questionnaire distributed by Commission IV.

Commission I dealt with Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World, Commission II with The Church in the Mission Field, Commission III with Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life, Commission IV with The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions, Commission V with The Preparation of Missionaries, Commission VI with The Home Base of Missions, Commission VII with

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Missions and Governments and Commission VIII with Cooperation and the Promotion of Unity.

Theological Echoes at Edinburgh

Was Edinburgh 1910 devoid of theology? (Hedlund 1993: 23)

The question posed by Hedlund, with reference to the presence of theology at Edinburgh, is one to which I now turn. Although there is much more to be written about the organisation of the conference, I will intersperse such information when dealing with the principal opinion-formers and influences on the gathering. At this point it would be helpful to provide a theological framework for the conference. Hedlund asks whether it could be said that Edinburgh 1910 was "devoid of theology" and then goes on to state that, while in his opinion the reports of the conference were not theological in themselves, the gathering could not be considered to be a-theological (ibid.). In support of this he focuses on the assumptions that lay behind the views shared and expounded amongst so many words spoken at the assembly. At the same time, he recognises that consensus was achieved on central points, the most obvious being each other's confession of Christ, and he argues that the very need for mission did not need to be justified at Edinburgh. It was a given assumption in a gathering of individuals and organisations whose very reason for existence was the impetus for mission. Hedlund then goes on to refer to the "unexpressed theology" of Edinburgh, which he then, paradoxically, outlines as being concerned with:

1. God's offer of Salvation.
2. The Christian's missionary duty.
3. The world's need for Christ.

These, he writes, are "profound and fundamental theological themes" (ibid.). I would argue, therefore, with his assertion that they are "unexpressed", because otherwise they would not be discernible, even in shadow form. I will argue that the theological themes outlined by Hedlund, and other themes, are expressed, but are also assumed and accepted as the norm and standard. It is true that a consensus is implicitly assumed, but those very assumptions do, of course, as Hedlund himself posits, demonstrate the

holding of and acceptance of certain theological positions. Often, then, theological positions can only be discerned in shadow form, behind the language, as it were, but they are there. In this section, we will tease out the theological strands in the documents that emerged from Edinburgh and relate these to the wider debates going on in the theological world, thereby placing the conference in its context at the juncture of a veritable torrent of often conflicting streams of thought with regard to mission and its theological underpinnings and justification. I will also examine the interaction between these missiological trends and wider debates in theology, examining their ramifications for christology, with particular emphasis on the uniqueness, finality and sufficiency of person of Christ and his role as a salvific figure for both Christian and non-Christian alike.

Cracknell takes an optimistic view of Edinburgh, entitling his main section on the conference "The Theology of Religion at the World Missionary Conference 1910", thus acknowledging that there was indeed theology at work in the gathering. His main focus is on Commission IV, which he regarded as being "one of the great turning points in the Christian theology of religions" (Cracknell, 1995: xi). In contrast, David Bosch comments "Jerusalem was far less confident than Edinburgh, where, for instance, no mention was made of a 'theology of religions'; the non-Christian religions were perfunctorily dismissed as 'perfect specimens of absolute error and masterful pieces of hell's inventions' which Christianity was simply called upon to oppose, uproot and destroy" (Bosch, 1980: 162). Cracknell, while willingly acknowledging negative approaches to non-Christian faiths at Edinburgh, nevertheless discerns a wealth of positive attitudes and a number of views being expressed which he describes as 'theological' and which he analyses in the context of theological trends which he has previously outlined and discussed at length. Cracknell is indeed concerned with only one single commission, that of Commission IV, but he nevertheless is able to find in the report of the commission and in the submissions and contributions to the commission many examples of deep resonance with contemporary theological trends.

Brian Stanley, subjects the various predictions made at Edinburgh to historical analysis, but makes this point with reference to the tone at the conference:

> Edinburgh 1910 thus spoke with two intermingled voices. The voice most audible in the public sessions of the conference was one of boundless optimism and unsullied confidence in the ideological and financial power of Western Christendom. A more muted and discerning voice, heard periodically throughout the text of the commission reports, and deriving from the more astute serving missionaries whose questionnaire replies formed the raw material for the reports, spoke of crisis and opportunity, challenge and competition. The former voice, of course, was soon to be rendered hollow and ultimately silent by the First World War and its aftermath. ... . The muted voice, however, is worth listening to: its predictions have proved partly right and partly wrong. (Stanley, 2004: 54)

Stanley then goes on to examine seven anticipated trends in the development of Christian mission, based on "the various explicit predictions or implicit assumptions made by the reports presented to the World Missionary Conference" (ibid.). The "muted voices" identified by Stanley are occupied more with strategic trends in the future of and the development of mission, but Cracknell highlights the presence of other muted voices which can be viewed as being concerned with the very theology that underpins their missionary experience and practice. The theological reflection at work in the replies to the questionnaire of Commission IV is particularly significant in that it gives an insight into a praxis that was too often hidden from the sight of the missionary societies at home.

Around the same time as the publication of Cracknell's examination of the contributions to Commission IV, Andrew Walls, writing of the scholarship of nineteenth-century missionaries, makes the point that it was in the field of theology that the scholars seemed to have written least. He states that "Theology was a *datum* to be explained and demonstrated in the new cultural setting, not something which would develop in it" (Walls, 1996: 197). Cracknell would certainly, I believe, not be in agreement with this. It is true that we are talking here (in Cracknell's thesis) about a proto-theology of mission being explored by the missionaries themselves, but still it is an embryonic form which is being nurtured by developments across the whole spectrum of sciences and disciplines as a result of nineteenth-century intellectual innovation and reaction against exclusivist mindsets. The very care taken to ensure a lack of theological discussion at Edinburgh could be evidence of a battle between power and theology. And, although Walls sees the lack of pure theological writing as a matter for "curious reflection", it could also be argued that the involvement of Christian missionary scholars in writing about the

sciences, linguistics, ethics, literature and anthropology shows a familiarity on their part with theories expounded by scholars such as Max Müller, which had theological implications and ramifications.

Elsewhere, Walls makes the point that the typical missionary also tended to be a minister. He refers to the report of Commission V, which outlined the dissatisfaction of the missionary societies with the lack of missionary material in the theological curriculum:

> The missionary must have the best education which his own country and church can give him (WMC V: 170) and that should include, wherever possible, a university education, including the study of languages, history, moral science and philosophy. When the commission considered the proper subjects of study in detail, they gave pride of place to the Bible, then to natural science, then to philosophy, and then to elementary medicine and hygiene (WMC V: 109–14).

> Philosophy received particular stress. 'A leading missionary in India' described a philosophical training as being more valuable to a missionary than a theological one. It enabled theology to be studied with ease and breadth, reduced the dogmatism so counter-productive on the mission field, and enabled the missionary's ideas to be better understood, whether by opponent or by convert (WMC V: 111f).

> Other experts have stated that the ideal training is furnished by the School of Literae Humaniores at Oxford, inasmuch as it develops best the general and thoughtful appreciativeness of students, and that an Honours man in that school requires only the addition of a moderate amount of theology strictly so-called in order to be qualified for work on the mission field (WMC V: 118).

There is, in the above, a curious dichotomy at work. On the one hand, theology with a missionary flavour is recognised as being necessary for effective missionary work, although the emphasis on the Bible and philosophy rather than theology itself is perhaps telling as to the amount of theology one could hope to find in the curriculum. Then, there is the almost complete dismissal of theology as a prerequisite for mission work. The sense is of the undervaluing of the missionary as a theologian, which may explain the readiness, on the part of the British certainly, to accede to the request of the Anglicans that theology be excluded from the parameters of the conference.

In his contribution to one of the 'Towards 2010' events commemorating the upcoming centenary of the conference, the Peruvian missiologist Samuel Escobar reflects on the decision to exclude theology from the discussions at Edinburgh and quotes the opinion

of the Evangelical scholar John Stott.[6] It is worth quoting Escobar at length, because his point is particularly pertinent to my argument:

> As I have pointed out above several Evangelical churches and organizations felt that they were the true inheritors of the spirit of Edinburgh 1910. However as the second cycle of mission activity, especially in the United States, had a polemical stance, it did not benefit from the experience and reflection of the first. New generations of missionaries without an adequate historical awareness or biblical training were condemned to repeat the mistakes of the past. It became necessary for theologians to embark anew in the search for a critical missiological reflection. This is what historian William H. Hutchison called 'familiar debates in an unfamiliar world'. At the same time, I also find sobering the remark of Joel Carpenter pointing to the evangelical isolation from previous missionary practice and experience: 'when a postfundamentalist, neo-evangelical theological movement appeared in the 1950s and 1960s, it virtually had to reinvent evangelical missions theology.'

> In a way Lausanne 1974 was a missiological reflection on the Evangelical missionary activity of the second cycle we have mentioned, just as Edinburgh 1910 was to a certain degree a reflection on the missionary practice of the 19th century that preceded it. The reflection was not critical enough, though in the Reports one finds many points of self-criticism and warning. However, missiological reflection requires a certain degree of theological definition because it involves understanding of biblical truth and its application to throw light on missionary practice and to help missionaries to face new situations and new contexts. I think this critical function of missiology is an equivalent of the critical function of theology for the daily life of the church. As missiologists dialogue with those men and women that are enthusiastic for mission, they have to face the impatience of practitioners that consider theological reflection as a useless abstract exercise, an impatience that grows if the missiologist is critical of their missionary practice.

> It is a well known fact that Edinburgh 1910 avoided theological definition. An ecumenical missiologist says 'In overall character, Edinburgh 1910 was not a conference on the "theology of mission" as we now understand it. It was a conference to design the *strategy* for a final campaign by the concerted forces of the kingdom of God as they assayed what was needed to complete the "unfinished task".' Anglican Evangelical John Stott offers a historical explanation, as he observes the contrast between the confident and optimistic mood in which the conference ended and the developments that followed it. He thinks that two influences undermined the expectations engendered at Edinburgh; one was the kind of socio-political events such as the two world wars: 'These devastating conflicts sapped the moral as well as the financial strength of the west, and signaled to the rest of the world the collapse of western culture and of its foundation, Christianity.' The second influence was theological and here I quote Stott extensively: 'Theologically, the fatal

6. Samuel Escobar, 'Mission from everywhere to everyone: the home base in a new century', a paper delivered to the 'Towards 2010' Seminar at New College, Edinburgh (September 2006)

flaw at Edinburgh was not so much doctrinal disagreement as apparent doctrinal indifference, since doctrine was not in the agenda. Vital themes like the content of the gospel, the theology of evangelism and the nature of the church were not discussed. The reason is that Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury, as a condition of Anglican participation in Edinburgh secured a promise from John R. Mott that doctrinal debate would be excluded. In consequence the theological challenges of the day were not faced. And during the decades which followed, the poison of theological liberalism seeped into the bloodstream of western universities and seminaries, and largely immobilized the churches' mission.' (Escobar, 2006: 10, 11)

Escobar examines the theological ramifications of the decision to exclude theological discussion. This is significant, because it supports my argument that Edinburgh 1910 can be viewed as being situated right in the centre of a theological super-highway, which had clear intersections with missiology, but which found itself coming to an abrupt cul-de-sac with regards to the World Missionary conference.

Stott's point about the emergence of theological liberalism out of Edinburgh's theological vacuum is a debatable point, because David Bosch observes that the spiritual bankruptcy of the world after the First World War and the Russian Revolution led to a crisis of confidence in Western Christianity, which in turn led to a re-evaluation of non-Christian religions. The militancy of Edinburgh, Bosch writes, and its exaltation of Western messianic consciousness, in which the Western gospel was presented as the global solution to global problems, in a sense became its theological legacy; in lieu of the legacy it perhaps could have left, which might have been reflection on a theology of religions, which in effect had to be faced at Jerusalem 1928 (Bosch, 1980: 160). In Bosch's view, in spite of the efforts of the organisers of Edinburgh 1910, they failed to secure the kind of reflective gathering they envisaged and instead, in emphasising activism over reflection "indisputably inaugurated the triumph of Americanism in missionary theology" (ibid.). Elsewhere, in his *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective* (1980), Bosch examines 'Americanism' in its role as reflecting a commitment to an expansionist Kingdom theology.

Escobar makes the point that Edinburgh had an "evangelical, pietistic-puritan spirit" (Escobar, 2006: 4) where the participants placed themselves in continuity with the Evangelicalism of Moody and the revivalist conventions of Northfield and Keswick. He identifies two cycles in missionary activity from Europe and America in the twentieth

century. The first cycle spans the period from 1910 to 1945, which incorporated, in Escobar's view, a period of missiological reflection within the missionary activity of mainline Protestant denominations. This missiological reflection was carried on particularly through the continuation movements, such as the International Missionary Council. However, in Escobar's view, the period following the foundation of the World Council of Churches in 1948 was a relatively stagnant one in terms of missionary activity within the mainline churches. This stood in stark contrast with a period of significant growth in those years for conservative Protestant agencies in both North America and Europe, expressed in the activities of faith missions and para-church ventures, which were highly critical of what had happened in the Ecumenical movement. Many of these agencies emerged out of new denominations, which evolved from separatist splits in mainline churches, often as a result of problems within the Ecumenical movement. The creation of the WCC had caused a lot of division within Protestant missionary circles. These new movements, which emerged in opposition to Ecumenical ventures, reacted strongly in a Cold War environment against the rise of and consolidation of Communism. The constituencies of both cycles became polarised, with the Ecumenical movement regarding the new conservative Protestant organisations and denominations as conservative and sectarian, and as instigators and sources of disunity. For the two sides, their perception of what actually constituted mission rapidly diverged, with the new order becoming more organised and mature, as well as growing in influence through its use of media, theological training and missionary conferences, and the old order increasingly finding itself unable to adequately define mission in a changing world.

Escobar examines the legacy and impact of the Lausanne movement, as he tries to discern continuities and discontinuities with Edinburgh 1910. Lausanne grew out of a solid Evangelical pedigree, which includes revivalist elements, but it also rediscovered the important heritage of holistic mission. It attempted theological definition in a missiological context and it gave birth to a number of Church Growth movements. However, the Church Growth movements are often characterised by a reluctance for theological reflection and definition, considering this to have taken place at Lausanne, with its Trinitarian confession, its statement on biblical authority and its expression of christological conviction. The dichotomy inherent in the legacy of Lausanne has been an emphasis on the holistic nature of mission on the one hand and the insistence on the primacy of evangelism on the other, the emphasis on evangelism being phrased in terms

that assume that, because the theological groundwork was done at the drafting of the Lausanne Covenant, there is no further need for reflection, but instead the focus needs to be on activism. For Escobar, Lausanne served as a missiological reflection on the Evangelical missionary activity of the second cycle, just as Edinburgh 1910 was a missiological reflection on the events that preceded it (ibid: 10). As has already been noted:

> However, missiological reflection requires a certain degree of theological definition because it involves understanding of biblical truth and its application to throw light on missionary practice and to help missionaries to face new situations and new contexts. I think this critical function of missiology is an equivalent of the critical function of theology for the daily life of the church. As missiologists dialogue with those men and women that are enthusiastic for mission, they have to face the impatience of practitioners that consider theological reflection as a useless abstract exercise, an impatience that grows if the missiologist is critical of their missionary practice (ibid: 10,11)

Escobar, as a result of his 'two cycle' theory, makes the important point that practitioners working in the second cycle had to virtually go back to basics to attempt to construct a theology of mission precisely because Edinburgh had failed to deal adequately with the challenge in its time. As a result, 'a postfundamentalist, neo-evangelical movement... virtually had to reinvent evangelical missions theology', Escobar says, quoting Joel Carpenter (ibid.). To highlight the failure of Edinburgh 1910 to adequately address theology, Escobar highlights the view of the Evangelical theologian, John Stott: 'the theological challenges of the day were not faced', resulting, in Stott's view, in the later rise of theological liberalism (ibid.).

The conference took place at the latter end of a period of considerable debate in the realm of christology, particularly in areas where it intersected with missiology. The Church, as a whole, had been through the age of biblical criticism, the radical theology of Maurice and Coleridge, the Alexandrian Platonism of Brooke Foss Westcott, the impact of the *Lux Mundi* scholars, the age of Troeltsch and Max Müller, yet, it would seem at the conference that only the most optimistic of vistas could be viewed ahead and the conference was to repeat rather than avoid the triumphalist stance it tried so hard to eschew. This time, however, the triumphalism was more subtle and more self-satisfied. It had behind it a wealth of christological and missiological debate, stretching back to the seventeenth century and further, yet it did not draw on these wells of wisdom to inform a

new era. In the next chapter, I will examine some of those antecedent streams which had fed the rivers of christology and missiology through an expanding landscape, where science, historical criticism and comparative religion were emerging as new paradigms out of the Enlightenment era.

Chapter 2

Mapping the Landscape: Christological and Missiological Contours in Eighteenth-Century British Theology

In considering the christological implications of missiological thinking and developments in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, the role of Edinburgh 1910 is an important factor in gauging the overall development of a changing theology, since it gathered missionaries from all over the world, galvanised missionary thinking and enabled missionaries in the field, at the front line of missionary enterprise, to express themselves. It was also, as has been said, reflective in its nature and it had at the forefront of its organisation the most prominent and influential missionary thinkers and planners alive. It also gleaned considerable wisdom and input from theologians (such as D. S. Cairns and Bishop Charles Gore) at the home base who, while not missionaries themselves, nevertheless had constructed theologies and approaches that were to have some impact on missiological thinking as a whole. It will be necessary at a later point to examine the place of the conference in the continuum of christological and missiological thought, to map out its position in the christological landscape and to analyse the influences that shaped it and those that flowed from it.

This thesis, however, is not only about the Edinburgh conference itself, but will view the conference as an important interpretative factor with regards to the wider fields of christology and missiology. It will use the conference as a 'crossroads event' from where the trajectories of both christology and missiology, past and future, can be examined. It will be necessary therefore to view the conference in the context of a rapidly changing christological theatre, one where the reluctance at Edinburgh to deal with the all-too-prevalent theological debates, many of which centred around the questions of uniqueness, identity and finality of Christ, may not have been, as John Mott's biographer asserts "of great significance for the success of the conference" in the long term (Hopkins, 1979: 346).

This chapter, and the next, will give a comprehensive overview of the changing christological and missiological landscapes mainly in the century prior to the Edinburgh

conference. It will be necessary, however, to also outline in some detail salient events prior to 1800, particularly developments that arose out of the foment of the Enlightenment period. In this particular chapter then, I discuss the eighteenth-century backdrop to nineteenth-century developments, but for the purposes of understanding the christological and missiological contexts. In the next chapter, I will look at the nineteenth-century debates and will show how these debates were not only theological in nature and in origin, but were deeply related to the wider changes in scientific, historical and social contexts. The changing faces of Christ in nineteenth-century theology mirror, I will argue, the changing face of the society of the period; and missiological developments were very closely linked to christological shifts and vice versa, leading to a mutual interaction between these two areas of theology, which in turn gave rise to a very dynamic, if embryonic, period of innovation with regards to the application of orthodox Christian theology.

The assertion of Claude Welch that twentieth-century theological issues may be seen as dependent on nineteenth-century developments is an essential backdrop to this current chapter (Welch, 1972: 1). I have said above that developments and shifts in missiological understanding, as a result of considerable self-reflection in the light of new discoveries in scientific and historical realms, also gave rise to a re-evaluation of christological assumptions (and vice versa) with regards to the finality, the uniqueness and the salvific value and integrity of not only the Christian message itself, but crucially of the very person of Christ. McGrath writes "the Enlightenment was destined to have a major impact upon one specific area of Christian theology in particular: the doctrines of the person and the work of Christ" (McGrath, 1994: 7). The very fact that the foundations of Christian missiology rest on an understanding of – and a resultant desire to propagate – the Christian message as one that has unique value and relevance with regards to its message of salvation means that any shift in a missiological understanding of the relevance of the Christian message to universal salvation is necessarily linked to christological understandings of the uniqueness and particularity of the person of Christ himself.

Christology and missiology as interdependent theologies

According to Kenneth Cracknell, the Methodist theologian, missionary thinker and expert in comparative religion, James Hope Moulton (1863–1917), writing post-Edinburgh 1910, recognised the impact of a changing missiological landscape on christological assumptions.

> Each several field of non-Christian religion can supply much-needed correctives to our popular Christian doctrine. The missionary takes with him the crude Western setting of New Testament truths, and is soon forced to reconsider his theology. He finds the doctrine of the Trinity a grievous stumbling block to the Moslems. He tries to explain it, and realizes that the doctrine elaborately worked out by the Greek theologians, so to express monotheism in its most absolute form, has been developed into practical Tritheism in the religious language of a race unaccustomed to fine distinctions and minutely exact statement. No wonder if he demands as an imperative necessity a re-statement of Trinitarian doctrine, which shall emphasise the Unity of God and define the meaning of 'Son' as applied to Christ, so that we may in coming back to the New Testament escape a reproach cast at us by the thoughtful Moslem (Cracknell, 1995: 277).

Within the context of the relationship between christology and missiology, the various debates that took shape in the nineteenth century, in both fields, had a direct bearing not only on each other, but also on developments in many strands of British theology. Missiological developments influenced the field of biblical studies, with many studies of the biblical foundations of missions being written by missiologists who were keen to establish correct hermeneutical approaches to communicating the gospel. The emerging discipline also had a strong impact on systematic theology, since the history of dogma in particular was often connected with a defence of the gospel in pluralistic settings. Ethical issues were to arise with regards to the approach of missionaries and missionary thinkers towards non-Christian peoples, young churches and developing nations, particularly in imperialistic settings. Missiology had to interact not only with faith systems, but also with the ideologies behind those systems and with cultural anthropology, the sociology of non-Western nations in particular, economics and political science (Verkuyl, 1987: 10, 11). This force of influence was mutual, and both christology and missiology interacted dynamically and effectively with each other to produce a synthesis of perspectival change.

The christological problem and its Enlightenment context

In this section on eighteenth-century developments, I will give an overview of both areas, concentrating on the shared backdrop of Enlightenment thinking to try to put into a chronological and theologically developmental context the influence of the Enlightenment itself on christological and missiological thinking as both disciplines enter the arena of nineteenth-century debate.

It is important to survey the eighteenth-century backdrop first of all. This is because within missiology in particular, the twin concepts of the origin of religion and the sharp distinctions that opened up between them, as a result of rational enquiry in the Enlightenment period, served to pave the way for later views of religion, which would be radically different from the christocentric and ecclesiocentric perspectives of pre-Enlightenment thought. This was the case whether religion was understood to be natural or revelatory in origin (Pailin, 1984: 22ff). Enlightenment influence on the notion of revelation opened up the way for radical new avenues of thinking, which in the nineteenth century led, among other things, to the rise of the discipline of comparative religion. The eighteenth-century background is important, then, because it sets the scene for these developments and underpins later movements. It does this by demonstrating their origins, dynamic and ultimately their flexibility in being accommodated, adapted and absorbed in many and various ways to provide both a philosophical rationale and a philosophical and technical language for a very new way of understanding the origins, revelatory and salvific status of world religions. Eighteenth-century thinking sheds light on a new way of understanding the status of both natural and revealed religion. It is also important to acknowledge the debt that nineteenth – and twentieth-century developments owed to the Enlightenment break with the primacy of revelation.

Welch remarks on the way in which, through the mid-nineteenth century in particular, what he calls the "christological problem" was very much at the forefront of debate in theology as a whole. According to Welch "Thence the whole of the nineteenth century may be seen as a struggle to affirm the humanity of Jesus" (Welch, 1972: 8). The seeds of this problem were sown in the soil of the Enlightenment and it will also be important to look at the roots of the christological debates.

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In Welch's view, the christological problem is the crux of the doctrinal debate within Christianity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is the pivotal issue around which all other debates revolve to a very large extent. For the purposes of this thesis, I argue that the christological question was central to missiological considerations and that missiology had to take very stark and full account of movements within christology. However, the obverse was also true, in that missiology reflected deeply on christology, since christology was at the very foundation of its rationale, its *raison d'être*, with regards to non-Christian faiths. Christological certainties underpinned missiological impetus and its functional validity. In so reflecting, missiology transformed these christological issues into its own image and, as a result of its own forces acting upon them, subjected them to analyses and re-interpretations that were rooted in the parallel internal missiological debates.

These debates owed their existence in no small part to the work of scholars like Friedrich Max Müller and the rising discipline of anthropology, but also due to the pioneering work of missionary theologians both at home and abroad, many of whom were in daily contact with non-Christian faiths and many others of whom were working on the home front and were attempting to forge a theology that would make sense of a new, emerging world-view within both science and culture. I will argue that missiological concerns in some quarters influenced christology in altering its trajectory, moving it from a christocentric and ecclesiocentric exercise, largely internal and interested in other faiths from a paternalistic, didactic and hegemonistic standpoint, and re-directed it to a place where it now had to reflect deeply upon itself as it, in turn, looked into the mirror of other faiths and discovered a shared relationship of commonalities. Some of this influence stemmed from an overt desire to reinterpret missiological approaches, whereas other aspects of it developed from reflection on the impact of scientific, historical and social developments on Christian theology, so that the christological and missiological outcomes, while significant, were not purpose-driven consequences. This provided the bases for a re-evaluation of Christian uniqueness and exclusivity and allowed for a new intellectual environment to develop where both missiology and christology could be re-shaped under the influences of scientific advances and understanding.

Intellectual forces for change in eighteenth-century theology and the christological problem

In surveying the landscape of developments in British theology in the nineteenth century, then, it is necessary to give an overview of the various movements that were at work in British and Continental, particularly German, theology in the eighteenth century. These movements, although largely independent forces at work, nevertheless formed a confluence of ideas which were to coalesce as a powerful force for change within theology as a whole. According to Barth, an understanding of the forces that shaped the eighteenth century, particularly an understanding of the significance of the Enlightenment, is insufficient if it focuses mainly on a narrow interpretation, which might be gained from merely appropriating these forces in their own terms (Barth, 1972: 36). Barth identifies 'Absolutism' as a characteristic of the Enlightenment period, a firm belief in the authority of humankind and in the lack of restraint in human nature. It seems as if Barth is outlining the 'Absolutist' as the archetypal human being of the Enlightenment era. The post-Copernican discovery that humanity was not at the centre of the universe served, paradoxically, not to humble this humanity, but rather, in its own eyes, to exalt it. The very fact that humans were able, through their own intellect and exploration, to discover that they were not at the centre of the universe was regarded as a revelation and was testament to the power of intellect and abstract thought. Humanity's horizons were also enlarged with the discovery of new lands and territories.

Bernard Reardon explains how this intellectual epiphany had a resultant impact on religious faith. The very idea of divine revelation, as distinct from the revelation granted to the intellect as a result of its own increasing self-knowledge and self-discovery, was a very problematic concept. This was made even more so by the notion of the inability of the human intellect to grasp such divine truths. Paradoxically, this situation was also common to and a feature of orthodox Christian thinking, the very idea that the things of God were beyond the grasp of the human mind by use of purely natural means. Referring to the English Deist, Matthew Tindal, as arguing for the consistency of divine revelation across all times, Reardon makes the point that one consequence of eighteenth-century sceptical rationalism was that Christian particularity could no longer be maintained by anyone who appealed to reason. This represented a significant break with the past, since the Reformation period had served to entrench traditions and to underline doctrinal belief, whilst also delineating Protestant and Catholic boundaries. However, the

Christian church of the Reformation period in its dogmatic traditions, whether Protestant or Catholic, appealed to scripture and the Church Fathers, and was essentially medieval in its character, its unity in terms of shared essentials intact, while at the same time differing in emphasis and ecclesiology (Reardon, 1966: 2–3). In contrast, the scientific understanding of the past and of the present enlarged not only the factual base of knowledge, but also emphasised the validity of the scientific understanding as the sole basis for belief. It was a philosophical, as well as a factual approach to epistemology. The ground of history was now the foundation upon which Man was building his self-comprehension (ibid: 6).

With reference to christology itself, Alister McGrath asserts that it was not a major point for disagreement in the Reformation period, with disagreement centring mainly on the nature of Christ's own divine attributes (McGrath, 1994: 14–16). In McGrath's view, such a period of calm in the field of christology over such a long period of time meant that, when the onslaught of the Enlightenment did arrive, Christianity itself was taken by surprise. Certainly McGrath believes that Christianity did not have the intellectual tools necessary to answer the critical questioning that emerged. Whereas, in the past, reason had been valued by the Church as a tool that could be employed in the argument for the existence of God, as utilised by Aquinas, it was also viewed as insufficient for the comprehension of certain religious truths, which lay outside its power to explain and reveal. While cautioning against the belief that the Enlightenment period itself had proved the all-sufficiency of Rationalism, McGrath nevertheless does not underestimate the impact that the era, and the exaltation of reason which it promoted, had upon Christianity as a whole and the basis of faith and belief in particular (ibid.).

The publication of John Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity* in 1695 had highlighted the idea that the Christian faith itself was a rational faith and was therefore able to be subjected to critical questioning. Locke decried the lack of use of reason itself as a revelation for the evidence of God, the result (he believed) of organised religion excluding reason from the religious sphere. Yet, reason, albeit in secret, owing to the power of the religious authorities, was able when looked for, searched for and attained, to lead to an apprehension of the knowledge of the existence of God (Locke, 1958: 57–8). Reason, according to Locke, was to be the judge of all and the court of final appeal. In repudiating innate ideas, Locke held that all knowledge could only be based on sense

and reflection upon sense experience. Experience itself was at the root of all ideas. While empiricism was at the very root of his thought, he insisted on the place of reason because reason enabled us to increase our level of knowledge and also enabled us to make reasonable and informed choices. Rationalism was all-pervasive in his thinking. For Locke, knowledge could not be restricted to those things that the human mind was capable of grasping. Some truths were above reason, but there could be no truths contrary to reason. So, Locke insisted that there was a place for the supernatural and for revelation. However, even revelation ultimately had to be judged by reason. "One may", writes Stephen Williams, "validly speak of faith as opposed to speaking of reason. One may not validly speak of faith as opposed to reason" (Williams, 1995: 32). In short, "One must have reason for believing" (ibid.).

Williams claims, "What Locke really does is connect faith with propositions above reason. This is *religious* faith, not attained via rational deduction…in general epistemology, reason pursuing knowledge, may fail to attain it and attain faith instead. Faith is distinguished from knowledge and both are the products of rational operations. In religious epistemology, we are entitled to sustain a familiar faith/reason contrast if reason now refers to the method of deducing the truth *on the probability* of a proposition. Faith refers to the mode of accepting a proposition not made out by reason at all" (ibid: 33). E. J. Lowe believes that one reason for Locke's rejection of the doctrine of innate ideas, the notion that "God 'imprints' on the human soul at the very beginning of its existence some fundamental ideas of a logical, metaphysical and moral nature – including the idea of himself – in virtue of which human beings are able to have certain knowledge of God's existence, his moral law and many features connected with the world" (Lowe, 2005: 23), was because Locke was convinced of the ability of the greatest scientists of his day, figures like Isaac Newton, Robert Boyle, Robert Hooke and Christiaan Huygens, to themselves develop valid methods "of discovering truths about the natural world, namely the method of systematic observation and experimentation" (ibid.). Also, Locke believed that freedom of thought was severely threatened by the doctrine, particularly freedom of thought and inquiry in science, morality and religion" (ibid: 24).

What is a key issue for McGrath with regards to the impact of Enlightenment thinking and rationalism on christology in particular, is that rationalism itself continued as an intellectual force well into the nineteenth century and maintained its influence as a critical

force acting on Christianity (McGrath, 1994: 16). The Reformation had challenged external forms of the Christian faith, as well as the media of the expression of medieval faith, but the Enlightenment questioned the very intellectual credentials upon which Christianity stood, a questioning that owed much to Continental Cartesianism and English Deism. The initial reverberations felt by this substantive and all-encompassing examination of the intellectual roots of Christianity were to be found within the world of German theology, particularly within academic theology. Welch cautions against the tendency in many circles, particularly in the historiography of British theology, towards over-dependence on the perspective of German theology to the detriment of movements within British theology itself. This has resulted, he argues, in a tendency towards interpreting the history of Protestant theology in purely German terms, leading to the neglect of the British perspective, or to a diminution of the role of British theology, reducing it to a movement largely subservient to and reactive to German trends (Welch, 1972: 9).

According to A. O. Dyson, "The Enlightenment constitutes a more important change than Augustine or the Reformation in the history of the church and theology" (Dyson, 1982: 45). Furthermore, Dyson believes "that it is principally in the Enlightenment that there first arose certain acute problems and striking possibilities which were passed to 19th and 20th century theology, and which have been partly confronted, but by no means mastered. Thus, I share Troeltsch's well-known point of view that it is to the Enlightenment that we must turn for the origins of modern theological culture" (ibid: 45, 46). Importantly, Dyson also writes, "I take the view that on balance the Enlightenment was more concerned to reconstruct religion than to destroy it" (ibid: 46). Dyson identifies fundamental differences in the character of the Enlightenment culture in England, France and Germany. "Whereas in England we may speak of a steady and sober prelude to the Enlightenment, in Germany the change was much more sudden" (ibid: 47). Dyson argues "that in major respects the English Enlightenment was more radical but that the German Enlightenment was more intense and theologically productive" (ibid.).

The German experience of the Enlightenment, then, was very different to that experienced by its counterparts, France and Britain, partly due to the fact that these latter encountered rapid political changes, while the German Enlightenment was largely

confined to the universities. As a result, while German society did not feel the same impact in its societal structures, as a result of either social upheaval or revolution, as did France, or the same political implications, as in the case of both Britain and France, it did apply to the existing social, political and ecclesiastical establishments an ongoing and thorough critique of their foundational principles (McGrath, 1994: 17). A close linkage between Lutheranism and the state system itself led to its theology being subjected to comprehensive critical analysis. Bolstered by the very nature of Protestantism itself, as a largely nationally-based, non-centralised movement with a history of protest and reform, Enlightenment thinking quickly infiltrated the theology faculties of German universities, radicalising the university theologians, in contrast to the mainly conservative tendencies of the national church leadership (ibid.).[7]

McGrath summarises the influence of Enlightenment thinking on Christianity as a whole as mainly presenting the Christian faith as an example of natural religion. It was thought that Christianity merely 'showcased' natural religion in a particular form. As such, divine revelation was not a necessary component of the Christian faith. In many ways, this approach was a restatement of beliefs prevalent in English circles, put forward, for example, by John Toland (1670–1722), in his *Christianity Not Mysticism*, and Matthew Tindal (1655–1733) in his *Christianity as Old as Creation* of 1730 (McGrath, 1994: 20). Revelation, then, far from having a divine origin or being a divine medium, was, in fact, an alternative term for the prevalent understanding, within Enlightenment circles, of the value and status of the authority and validity of moral truths, which could be apprehended by enlightened human reason. The exaltation of reason over revelation and its utilisation as a tool with which to judge reason, as advocated by Locke, became a virtual cornerstone in the establishment of reason as the supreme judge of human religious practice (ibid: 20–21). Since religion was in effect rational in character, it could be thoroughly subjected to the same analysis as any other category of knowledge.

Peter Harrison, in his *'Religion' and the Religions in the English Enlightenment* (1990), argues that, certainly in England, the emergence of a new interpretative framework in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries gave rise to a certain methodology which

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7. See Clayton, John, *Religions, Reasons and Gods: Essays in Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Religion* (2006), especially chapter 10 (p. 245), entitled 'The debate about God in early-modern British philosophy'.

consisted of the testing of religious truths and theories and the comparison of religions. Referring to a process of ideation, based in the philosophy of science, whereby the object of rationalist study becomes itself shaped in a rationalist form by the very focus of the rationalist method of enquiry itself, Harrison views the development of the scientific study of religion as emanating from this very process. Within England itself, according to Harrison, the impact of the religious upheavals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – and the emergence of historical criticism with regards to Biblical truth itself – led, over a period of time, to religion gradually being seen in natural terms rather than in terms of having a sacred history (ibid: 2–3).

Hume's critique of natural religion

In time, of course, natural religion itself became the object of critical analysis, particularly from the pen of David Hume (1711–1776). His 'Essay on miracles' (1748) established his credentials as a critic of the New Testament accounts and challenged Christianity to find ways to establish the divinity of Christ other than by a reliance on the testimony of the miraculous: "A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined" (Hume, 1964: 93). His *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*, published in 1779 after his death, criticised the argument from 'design', arguing that random occurrence was an entirely plausible and possible explanation for the emergence of the ordered universe. Dealing with causality in his dialogues and in his *Treatise*, as well as in his *Inquiry concerning Human Understanding* (1748), Hume argued that the concept of cause is not a prior necessary and neither does it require immediate evidence when applied to the notion of the existence of God. He reduced causality to a mere custom or habit of mind, useful but without philosophical foundation (ibid: 43). Hume's *Natural History of Religion* (1757), regarded by Welch as not being adequate in its treatment of the origins of religion, in contrast with later works, did however deal a fatal blow to the idea that actual religions developed in an historical continuum out of a universal and underlying rational religion. Religious psychology, according to Hume, was rooted in fear and hope, and not in an attempt to discover truth (ibid: 44), an impulse which Hume also applied to revealed religions.

As can been seen, then, the battle between natural and revealed religion was a very real one and was to emerge and re-emerge over the next two hundred years or so to provide a

philosophical framework within which various models of interpretation could be developed, particularly, within Christian missiology, with regards to the role of Christianity and its status amongst the faiths. David Pailin writes:

> Discussions about natural religion in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are confused by a lack of agreement about the meaning of the phrase. For some 'natural religion' refers to the truths which all people can in theory determine by the use of their reason, either by considering the character of reality or by investigating the contents of their understanding. For others, it is the religion which God had revealed to Adam and which, in principle or in practice, has been transmitted from Adam to all humanity. For some, 'natural religion' denotes the beliefs and practices of those who are 'natural' human beings-unaffected, that is, by civilization; for others it means the religion of those who are untouched by revelation – usually those outside the influence of Judaism, Christianity and, since Mahomet is often held to have adapted many of his ideas from Jewish and Christian teaching, Islam. (Pailin, 1984: 23)

In his *Natural History,* Hume is dealing with issues that had faced people in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, arising from a new era of exploration, which had caused the privileged status of Christianity and the validity of the Judaeo-Christian hegemony to be questioned.

It was Hume who brought about, in Harrison's view, the distinction between the rational bases of belief and the question of the actual historical origins of belief. The deists had believed that the reasonableness of faith could not be separated from enquiry into the origin of faith. In a universal sense, all men and women everywhere could comprehend natural religion by the exercise of reason, albeit a vulnerable comprehension that could be corrupted by the machinations of corrupt religious leaders. Reason, according to Hume, however, was much more frail than some would think and reason was not an issue in the development of religion. The reasonableness of religion and the origin of religion were separate. All religion was irrational and devoid of moral character, whether natural or revealed (Harrison 1990: 171).

Within the milieu of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the very term 'nature' had taken on a variety of meanings. Religion was being very much brought into the realm of the natural. What was being earnestly sought for was a role for God in this natural world, even by those who espoused the new sciences, since many of them did not want

necessarily to destroy religious belief, but rather to rationalise it and bring it within the ambit of a natural framework. The understanding of what constituted the natural order tended to change and develop. It could be regarded as being that which was in opposition to the supernatural order, the result of human sin and in opposition to revealed faith. Francis Bacon maintained that the "light of nature" could be understood in two senses: one having its origin in reason, induction, sense and argument, and the other being experienced as an inward instinct which worked with the law of conscience. Kant was later to label these understandings as "pure reason" and "practical reason" respectively. The latter "inward instinct" had its origins in Renaissance thought and its roots in Stoic philosophy. In this understanding, nature is regarded as being another mode of divine operation in the world, not opposing the supernatural, but rather complementing it. This view was adopted by the seventeenth-century Platonists, expressing the view that natural religion in its purest form was, in fact, the perfect example of religion, a religion expressed in moral terms and which, as a result of its origin in God, should not differ from revealed religion.

Gradually, the idea of nature having its own order and its own system of laws came into being, and revealed religion was categorised as belonging to that realm governed by 'convention'. Positive religions were placed outside the realm of nature by English free-thinkers (ibid: 5–7). However, in the Reformation period and before, a synthesis which had been in place, holding that the natural and the revealed actually completed each other, a synthesis which had been worked through by medieval theologians and which had been also a feature of Catholic theology, was attacked by the reformers, and natural and revealed religion were now held to be in opposition to each other. For both Luther and Calvin, the role of human reason in the Fall meant that natural theology could not be trusted. Natural reason represented man's efforts and reflected the very worst of man's nature. Hence, non-Christian faiths, based as they were on natural knowledge, were empty of salvific value and held no truth.

Harrison argues that the Reformation did two things in particular that were to have very major implications for future ideas about the development of a theology of religions. The Reformers set up the conditions for religious pluralism and they also, by maintaining that other faiths were manifestations of natural religion and by giving non-Christian faiths a negative role through the appropriation of their perceived shortcomings to demonstrate

parallel shortcomings in inter-Christian factional disputes, provided a model for how religious forms should be treated. In Harrison's view, this comparison of 'religions' in time became the discipline of comparative religion, and crucially, a prolonged comparison of the parallels between various factions of Christianity and some perceived counterpart in another faith system led to the belief that all forms of Christianity had at least something in common with other faiths. Christianity was gradually being seen as being different in degree rather than in substance (ibid: 7–9). Christianity was losing its privileged status. Pailin writes:

> Hume, though, not only uses the evidence of other religions to discredit religious belief in terms of its origins: he also claims, again on the basis of both the empirical evidence and the intrinsic rationality of the matter, that polytheism is in some respects much superior in its moral consequences to monotheism, even though the latter is the more rational belief. Referring to 'Machiavel' (and anticipating Nietzsche), he suggests, with faint reservations, that the 'doctrines of the CHRISTIAN religion' fit people 'for slavery and subjection' whereas polytheism promotes 'activity, spirit, courage, magnanimity, love of liberty, and all the virtues which aggrandize a people'. (Pailin, 1984: 38)

Widening the parameters of soteriology: the role of the Cambridge Platonists

Another group of people who were instrumental in creating a theology of religions were the anti-predestinarian English Platonists, who could not accept that a God who was capable of creating a rational creation could not also offer a method of salvation that accorded with reason, the Platonists finding predestination particularly problematic. The English Platonists looked back to the Renaissance Platonists and particularly to Nicolas of Cusa (1401–1464), the German cardinal credited by Max Müller with having been the first to study non-Christian faiths from a scholarly and historical standpoint; he had initiated a debate on the very possibility of being able to have knowledge of God at all. For Nicolas of Cusa, the fact that different faiths existed meant not that different gods were necessarily being worshipped, but the fact of many faiths arose from the limits of human knowledge. So, even the encounter between one person and God might be very different to that between another and God. Each encounter is unique, and the great gulf between the finite and the infinite means that all 'objective' descriptions of the divine will be true only in a relative sense. The existence of many religious beliefs, then, means that behind all of these expressions of faith there must lie a single reality. Cusa accorded no

special status to Christian revelation since all divine truth was unknowable and could only be thought of as being 'other'. Cusa placed the emphasis on faith itself, since the object of faith is always unchanging. So, while the outward expressions of faith might change, the thing signified by faith does not change (Harrison, 1990: 10–12). There is therefore, in Cusa's view, one ideal religion at the base of all religious expression. The Platonists had given new meaning to the term 'religion'. Now, it was that which had many different expressions.

The distinction between natural and revealed religion led, among the Protestant scholastic establishment, to an emphasis on the importance of knowledge, so as to make a strong contrast between knowledge that could come from nature and knowledge that could be apprehended by reason and strengthened by study and instruction. The understanding of 'religion' as a body of beliefs was replacing the role of faith and piety. The unaided mind could not receive even revealed truth, never mind natural truth. In practice, even salvation by grace through faith was regarded as needing to be rooted in a knowledge that would illuminate the truths of revealed religion. The Scotch Creed of 1560, the Westminster Confession of 1647, the Thirty-Nine Articles of 1563 and the Lambeth Articles of 1595 all highlighted the insufficiency of nature in mediating a saving knowledge of God (ibid: 20-22). Having its beginning in the sense of being able to discern the will of God, within Calvinism certainly, this saving knowledge was gradually taking on the hue of credal and objective truth.

Now, however, other religions could also be viewed as a system of beliefs and could be compared with one another. The debates around soteriology were leading also to the view amongst theological thinkers that a natural religion must be considered as a possibility, particularly as the various theories, within the context of a revealed faith, regarding the eventual destiny of the unevangelised, were proving very problematic to reconcile with the difficulties posed. The Cambridge Platonists argued the authority of innate ideas and common notions, as advocated by Plato and later by Origen and Augustine, and developed into the idea of self-evident logical truths by Anselm and Descartes. The Cambridge Platonists tended towards the Arminian rather than the Calvinist view of the corruption of nature and natural religion, but they emphasised also that salvation needed to be based on moral laws, which could not be exclusively

dependent on God's will, repudiating the idea of a universal order emanating from an absolute independent will (ibid: 29–30).

The revival of Platonism, which was demonstrated through the Cambridge Platonists, was not the only movement of its kind. An expression of Platonism that had its roots in a broader European revival was also highly influential and persisted into the eighteenth century. This Platonism relied on a reinterpretation of Cartesian thought, which merged Descartes with an Augustinian Christian philosophy and theology, and which had been propagated by Nicolas Malebranche (see S. Brown in Rogers, Vienne and Zarka, 1997: 197). It had its roots in scholastic theology, which itself constituted an important element of Anglican clerical formation, at Oxford and in other places (ibid: 198). One exponent of this Platonic movement, Arthur Collier (1680–1732), an Anglican clergyman trained at Oxford, wrote his *Credo* in 1709, in which he espoused a panentheist approach "that the whole universe and everything that happens in it is already contained in God from all eternity" (ibid: 199). Brown claims that Collier and the philosopher George Berkeley (1685–1753) both shared an interest in the thought of Malebranche and that both held strongly to "the dependence upon God of all created things and expressed this by asserting that all things were in some sense contained in God" (ibid: 207). Brown makes a distinction between the Platonism of the Cambridge Platonists and what he terms the 'Moderns'. Both groups, however, wish to "represent Nature as an expression of the divine nature" (ibid: 210). So, the Platonists are attempting to formulate a Christian understanding of humanity's role in nature and to widen the ambit of divine activity, an approach that was to resonate with the proponents of Logos christology in the nineteenth century.

Enlightenment influences on mission

In examining the impact of the Enlightenment on Christian mission, David Bosch names "radical anthropocentrism" as the dominant characteristic in the legacy of the Enlightenment (Bosch, 1991: 267, 268). Prior to this, "life in all its stratifications and ramifications was pervaded with religion" (ibid.). While the Enlightenment did not deny a place to religion, in Bosch's view, it did "radically relativize the exclusivist claims of Christianity" (ibid.).

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Christianity, even when it resisted the Enlightenment mindset, could not help but be influenced and shaped by the newly emergent world-view. Reason now became an important consideration. It was already an important feature of theologising in the Patristic period, but now it had lost its deference to faith and reason it "supplanted faith as point of departure" (ibid: 269). Theology now found itself on equal footing with other disciplines, different only in the object of its study, but not in the methods expected of it. Gradually, God was pushed to the margins in the era of a new humanity, a human society that did not need "superstition and arbitrary authority" (ibid.). Schleiermacher's divorcing of religion from reason (a step also taken by pietism and the evangelical awakenings, Bosch asserts) was done in response to the Enlightenment challenge and was designed to locate religion in human feeling and in experience (ibid.). Religion was also, in a sense, privatized (ibid.). Instead of its role right at the centre of all public life, it now had to accept its diminished status and its relativised position. It was simply one sphere of life amongst many. Theology itself took on the role of a science and Christianity sought to create a "Christian society" in which it could have an official role (ibid: 270). There also arose, Bosch claims, a "modern updating of seventeenth century Deism", where secularism was embraced and a process of desacralisation was put into effect (ibid.).

There was a growing awareness of the historical differences between the Enlightenment period and the period of the biblical texts.

> The logical outcome of this course was, naturally, that Christianity was reduced to one province of the wide empire of religion. Different religions merely represented different values; each was a part of a great mosaic. Two different 'truths' or 'facts', two different views of the same 'reality', cannot coexist; two different values, however, can. Above all, the role of religion was to oppose any form of sectarianism, superstition and fanaticism and to cultivate moral fibre in its adherents, thereby reinforcing human reason. Religion should, however, under no circumstances challenge the dominant worldview. Religion could coexist alongside science, but without the first ever impinging on the latter. (ibid: 272)

In the new Enlightenment age, all difficulties could be solved, since the world, viewed as a mechanical system, could be controlled and manipulated. The human being was a free and independent individual, with each individual capable of making his and her own decisions and relating on their own terms to God, if they so wished to do, without any ecclesiastical intervention (ibid: 273). Every boundary was being pushed further and

further to its limits. The modern missionary movement owed to the Enlightened the engendering of an expansionist world-view within all spheres of life; it was unlikely that the missionary movement itself would forego the opportunities offered by such an expansionist tendency, but it was inevitable that it would in turn be shaped by the Enlightenment.

Conclusion

Hume had seriously undermined the belief, not only in miracles, but in the historical development of religions out of monotheism, and thereby out of a 'universal' basis of rational religion. His *Natural History* examined the historical origin of religious beliefs and made an important distinction between these and the rational grounds for belief. Hume's 'Essay on miracles' had undermined the historical basis of divine intervention in human affairs and a major foundation for the divine origin of Jesus. No human testimony could be relied upon to prove that a miracle had taken place and no supposed historical event which did not have an analogous happening in the present day could be relied upon as valid.

Lessing and Reimarus had dealt further with the topic of divine revelation by questioning the epistemic value of history and the relationship between the contingent truths of history and the necessary truths of reason. H. R. Mackintosh writes:

> Two hundred years ago a striking change of attitude took place in serious students of the person of Jesus Christ. Till then the point of departure had prevailingly been *theocentric*, as it may be called; that is, men engaged in Christological construction set out from the Eternal Word or Son, the Second Person of the Trinity ... Somewhere near the beginning of the eighteenth century, pioneer minds began to feel that this cannot be the right path for human intelligence. We must start from a point closer to ourselves ... The point of view, in other words, gradually became *anthropocentric*. (Mackintosh, 1914: 247, 248)

The Enlightenment focus on reason over divine revelation led to the understanding that a belief in revelation unfolding through history, or through an historical figure, such as Jesus, was impossible to hold. Jesus took on the role, not of divine redeemer, but as a moral teacher, whose teaching reflected ideals which were exemplified in rationalism. Influential philosophers of the Enlightenment, such as John Locke, maintained that reason had to be the best guide and judge in all things. Jean-Jacques Rousseau strongly

opposed any notion of the concept of original sin. Old certainties were being subjected to forensic examination.

As has been discussed above, all of these events together constituted a substantial challenge to both christology and missiology. However, as has been noted, the missionary movement also found itself as inheritor of new areas for growth as a result of Enlightenment expansionism; the Christian Platonists had succeeded in widening the terms in which soteriology could function, and Christian thinkers, especially in the British context, were about to accept the challenge offered by Enlightenment thought.

The nineteenth century sees theologians and missionary thinkers responding in creative terms which lead to a rich and varied degree of interplay between christology and missiology and between both of these disciplines, the rest of theology and wider scientific and cultural developments.

Chapter 3

Christological and Missiological Developments in the Early Nineteenth-Century Intellectual Framework

In this chapter, I will trace the path taken by both missiology and christology through the intellectual landscape of the early nineteenth century. The ambit of theology as a whole in this period is just too great to cover in a work of this length, so I will confine myself to examining certain key areas, which I contend will demonstrate the trajectories taken by both areas of theology in their contemporary intellectual matrix. I will discuss developments in the wider academic climate, which impinged and impacted on christology and missiology, and I will seek to give a detailed overview of the foundational issues on which later nineteenth-century developments were to build.

Philosophical foundations

The impact of the philosophy of Immanuel Kant

The nineteenth-century period is described by H. R.Mackintosh as "one of the most notable ever traversed by the Christian church. The nineteenth century , with some extension into the twentieth, forms, roughly speaking, the area of our subject, and exhibits a confluence of various streams, issuing in a complexity of ideas, a fascinating yet confusing uniformity, which is very unlike the theology of three hundred years ago, but on the other hand recalls the life of the early Church" (Mackintosh, 1947: 1). The philosophy of Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) is an integral part of the intellectual mosaic that spreads itself across the period from the last decades of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth. The impact of his theories traversed the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and had profound implications for both missiology and christology. Enlightenment, wrote Immanuel Kant, "is the human being's emergence from his self-incurred minority. Minority is inability to make use of one's own understanding without direction from another. This minority is self-incurred when its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. *Sapere aude!* Have courage to make use of your own understanding! is thus the motto of the Enlightenment" (Kant, 1996: 17). In his short essay, 'An answer to the question: what is enlightenment?' (1784), Kant emphasises the importance of independent thought in a realm (the realm of faith and belief) where he believed the

authority of such independent thought was regularly usurped. "It is so comfortable to be a minor! If I have a book that understands for me, a spiritual adviser who has a conscience for me, a doctor who decides upon a regimen for me, and so forth, I need not trouble myself at all. I need not think; if only I can pay, others will readily undertake the irksome business for me" (ibid.). Kant concludes " I have put the main point of enlightenment, of people's emergence from this self-incurred minority, chiefly in matters of religion, because our rulers have no interest in playing guardian over their subjects with respect to the arts and sciences and also because that minority, being the most harmful, is the most disgraceful of all" (ibid: 21).

In 1781, Kant had published his *Critique of Pure Reason,* in which he attempted to examine the foundations for human knowledge. In 1783, in his *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics that will be able to Come Forward as a Science,* he referred back to Hume's impact on metaphysics: "no event has occurred that could have been more decisive with respect to the fate of this science than the attack made upon it by David Hume. He brought no light to this kind of knowledge, but he certainly struck a spark from which a light could well have been kindled if it had hit some welcoming tinder whose glow had been carefully kept going and made to grow" (Kant, 2002: 55). Hume, Kant goes on to say, "was the very thing that many years ago first interrupted my dogmatic slumber and gave a completely different direction to my researches in the field of speculative philosophy" (ibid: 57).

In his *Critique of Pure Reason,* in the section entitled 'The distinction between pure and empirical knowledge', Kant, while acknowledging "There can be no doubt that all our knowledge begins with experience" (Kant, 1964: 41), transforms this statement by adding "but though all our knowledge begins with experience, it does not follow that it all arises out of experience"(ibid.). He goes on to explain this in more detail:

> for it may well be that even our empirical knowledge is made up of what we receive through impressions, and of what our own faculty of knowledge (sensible impressions serving merely as the occasion) supplies from itself. If our faculty of knowledge makes any such addition, it may be that we are not in a position to distinguish it from the raw material, until with long practice of attention we have become skilled in separating it. (ibid: 42)

Knowledge, then, in the form of this 'raw material' is external to us and we receive it from outside ourselves. Our mind, with its internal and in-built conceptual framework, processes that material using several categories. Kant's discussion of *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge, and synthetic and analytic judgements, in the introduction to the *Critique* is beyond the scope of our discussion here, but in defining the terms he understands *a priori* knowledge as that which is "absolutely independent of all experience", not just independent of "this or that experience", and *a posteriori* as "empirical knowledge, which is knowledge possible only *a posteriori*, that is through experience" (ibid: 43). An analytic judgement is made when "the predicate B belongs to the subject A, as something which is (covertly) contained in the concept A" (ibid: 48). A synthetic judgement is made when "B lies outside the concept A, although it does indeed stand in connection with it" (ibid.).

Synthetic judgements are based on experience (ibid: 49), but when the mind processes the raw material of sense data from the external world, it does so using "Forms of Intuition", which are based on the concepts of time and space (ibid: 67–91) and a "Table of Categories" or "The Pure Concept of the Understanding" (ibid: 111–19). As a result, "all objects are therefore mere appearances, and not given us as things in themselves which exist in this manner. For this reason also, whereas much can be said *a priori* as regards the form of appearances, nothing whatsoever can be asserted of the thing in itself, which may underlie these appearances" (ibid: 86–7). The human mind, therefore, shapes anything with which it engages. The 'thing-in-itself' can never be known for certain. Things-in-themselves are not possible objects of our knowledge:

As a result of this reasoning, Kant goes on to question, under the severest scrutiny, the arguments put forward for the existence of God – the ontological, the cosmological and the physico-theological (or teleological) (ibid: 500–24) – finally engaging in a 'Critique of all theology based on the speculative principles of reason' (ibid: 525).

Barth views Kant's christology as lacking that which would make Jesus anything other than an exemplar or teacher, in that "the name of Jesus or Christ never, so far as I can see, flowed from his pen in any of his writings, and that he even found a way of avoiding it in the numerous quotations from the Bible which he uses in the *Religion within*. He allows him to appear only as 'the teacher of the Gospel' " (Barth, 1972: 287). In Barth's

view, theology is left with choices as to how to respond to Kant. Theology can accept the Kantian premise as the rationalist theologians did, or a revised Kantianism as followed by Ritschl and Hermann in the second half of the nineteenth century, following a Kantian revival (ibid: 306). The importance of the revision by Ritschlianism of Kantian theory and its influence on Edinburgh 1910 will be discussed in chapter six. On the other hand, theology could accept the method offered by Kant while still critiquing it. It can "broaden and enrich the conception of reasons which form the premise" (ibid.) by focusing, as Schleiermacher did, on the capacity of feeling, thereby "correcting Kant's conception of the problem" (ibid.). A further approach, which Barth notes was not taken seriously, was to question "not only the application of the Kantian conception of the problem, but that conception itself, and therefore the autocracy and its competence to judge human reason in relation to the religious problem" (ibid: 306, 307).

The ramifications of Kant's view, and that of other Enlightenment thinkers, for the historicity of the message of Christian revelation and incarnation were profound. But, so too was the impact of Kant's thinking on the relationship between morality and religion, particularly with regards to the relevance of the incarnation and Christian soteriology. If humankind can achieve moral enlightenment of itself and without the need for a Christian saviour, what need for Christ, except as a moral example? The implications of Kant's philosophy (and theology) for missiology are spelled out by Netland, with a particular emphasis on what he views as Kant's rejection of the "scandal of particularity" (Netland, 2001: 139).

He thus explicitly rejected the "scandal of particularity" of orthodox Christianity, with its claims about special revelation and a particular incarnation, arguing that a religion based upon a particular revelation to a specific people cannot be normative for all people since it lacks the universality and necessity required of genuine religion. What is required for a genuinely rational religion (which for Kant was the only acceptable kind) is universality, or equal access to the essential truths of religion for all people at all times and in all places, and the certainty of truth that comes only from reason and cannot be derived from the contingencies of history.

This "scandal of particularity", although in somewhat different form from that expressed by Kant, remains at the heart of today's dissatisfaction with the traditional Christian position on other

religions. Moreover, Kant's universal moral religion has some strong similarities to certain forms of contemporary religious pluralism, such as that of John Hick. (ibid: 139, 140)[8]

Concluding that Kant's impact on Western thought "has been enormous" (ibid: 140), Netland believes of Kant that "in spite of his desire to steer clear of subjectivism, and in spite of his desire to preserve the objectivity, necessity and universality of our judgements about the world, Kant's philosophy actually had the opposite effect and was used even in his lifetime to support more relativistic and subjectivist views" (ibid.). For Netland, Kant's thought established a foundation for the conclusion made by thinkers who came after him "that there are many alternative ways of interpreting reality, and indeed to speak of alternative realities themselves" (ibid.). So, in dealing with the work of Herder (1744–1803), a contemporary of Kant and someone who came under the influence of Kant while at the University of Königsberg, Netland writes "But of course it is not only the mind that shapes our experiences. Exposure to the many peoples of the world stimulated new disciplines such as cultural anthropology and comparative religions, which emphasized the diversity of belief and practice and the roles of culture and religion in shaping perceptions of reality" (ibid.).

In 1881, Max Müller translated Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* into English, one hundred years after its first publication. Citing the *Critique* as "my constant companion through life" (Müller, 1915: xxxiv). In Lecture 1 of his *Introduction to the Science of Religion* (1882), Müller builds on the thought of Kant, referring to Kant's denial to the human intellect of "the power of transcending the finite, or the faculty of approaching the Infinite. He closes the ancient gates through which man had gazed into Infinity; but, in spite of himself, he was driven in his 'Criticism of Practical Reason' to open a side-door through which to admit the sense of duty, and with it the sense of the Divine. This has always seemed to me the vulnerable point in Kant's philosophy, for if philosophy has to explain what is, not what ought to be, there will and can be no rest till we admit that there is in man a third faculty, which I call simply the faculty of apprehending the Infinite, not only in religion, but in all things" (Müller, 1882: 15, 16).

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8. Hick employs aspects of Kant's epistemology to answer questions about perspectivalism with regards to pluralism. In a discussion of how the Real can be known, Hick makes reference to the distinction, particularly in the more mystical strands of religious traditions, between the "Real or Ultimate or Divine *an sich* (in him/ her/ its-self) and the Real as conceptualised and experienced by human beings" (Hick, 1990: 117).

Pfleiderer assesses Kant's contribution to religious thought, writing originally in 1890, nine years after Max Müller's publication of the *Critique*, in the following terms: "Thus in Kantian philosophy, there lay side by side the germs of various tendencies of thought, which afterwards took very different directions. And it was precisely this wealth of suggestions, which might be developed into totally distinct lines of thought, which constituted the vast importance of his philosophy for his age, at the same time rendering the preservation of its original form impossible. While no thinker of the time remained uninfluenced by it, not one adopted it in its entirety" (Pfleiderer, 1923: 19). Such a view is borne out even further by Firestone and Palmquist, referred to above, when they write in the preface to *Kant and the New Philosophy of Religion*: "A distinctive concern all the contributors to this volume share is the conviction that Kant's relevance as a religious thinker has been seriously misjudged by many, if not most, past interpreters ... and that the practical applicability of many of his ideas has been grossly underestimated as a result" (Firestone and Palmquist, 2006: xxi).

The Pietist and Romanticist reactions against Rationalism

The emergence in Germany in the 1780s of the Counter-Enlightenment movement, also known as *Sturm und Drang* ('Storm and Stress'), signalled a strong reaction against the "Newtonian mechanistic interpretation of nature and its deadening effect on feeling and the life of the human spirit" (Livingston, 1997: 69).

> In philosophy, the competency of analytical reason and the adequacy of Kant's critique of metaphysics and his reconstructed moral religion were now challenged. New thinkers, nurtured in the bosom of Pietism and the heritage of German Lutheranism, declared Newtonianism and Kantianism mistaken and subversive of authentic religion. Some found in Hume an ally who could be seen as upholding the right of faith over reason. The new thought came to be called *Glaubensphilosophie* or *Gefuhlsphilosophie*, philosophy of faith or feeling. (ibid.)

Johann Gottfried Herder

The tendencies against the Newtonian world-view are generally categorised as Romanticism, emphasising the emotional side of human nature rather than the rationalism so prevalent in the eighteenth century. One of the early exponents of the romantic tendency was Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803). I include Herder in this

discussion because not only can aspects of his thought be seen as an early precursor of relativist pluralism, but he also stressed the *humanity* of humankind, over against the idea of the human as a "mind of pure reason" (Barth, 1972: 326). He highlighted the achievements of the medieval era, gave new attention to the Reformation period and to the thought of Luther (ibid: 325) and repudiated Kant's notion of radical evil (ibid: 328). For Herder, God was to be found in "living experience" (ibid.). He is also open to the concept of revelation: "standing within history also means on principle standing in the stream of revelation" (ibid: 330).

So, no less a scholar than Barth says of him that "Herder's significance for those theologians who came after him can scarcely be rated highly enough. Without him the work of Schleiermacher and De Wette would have been impossible, and also the peculiar pathos of the course of theology in the nineteenth century … But for Herder, there would have been no Troeltsch" (ibid: 316).

Netland hails him as "A remarkable thinker who gave early expression to many themes that were to become entrenched in modern cultural relativism" (Netland, 2001: 140). For the purposes of this chapter, I will narrow my focus on Herder to an assessment of his impact from missiological perspectives.

In his *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1784–91), Herder writes in anthropological terms: "No two leaves of any one tree in nature are to be found perfectly alike; and still less do two human faces, or human forms resemble each other. Of what endless variety is our artful structure susceptible"(Herder, 1968: 3). Of the interconnectedness of humankind with nature around it, he writes: "he is a multitudinous harmony, a living self on whom the harmony of all the powers that surround him operates" (ibid: 4). Then, "as the human intellect, however, seeks unity in every kind of variety, and the divine mind, its prototype, has stamped the most innumerable multiplicity upon the Earth with unity, we may venture from the vast realm of change to revert to the simplest position: *all mankind are only one and the same species*" (ibid: 5). Herder has already underlined this point in his *Treatise on the Origin of Language* (1772), where he writes: "Each human being has, to be sure, all the abilities that his whole species has, and each nation the abilities that all nations have. However, it is nevertheless true that a *society invents more than a human being* and *the whole human species invents more than a single people* and

this indeed not merely *as a result of the quantity of heads* but *as a result of the manifold and intensive increase of relational circumstances* (Herder, 2002: 159).

Having established his belief in the unity of the human race, a unity which he views as existing in the midst of a diversity of custom and expression, Herder goes on to discuss the origin of language, its role in culture and its place in the development of that culture. He dismisses a divine origin to language: "If an angel or heavenly spirit had invented language, how could it be otherwise that the language's whole structure would have to be an offprint of this spirit's manner of thought?" (ibid: 99), and he argues for language as being an innate part of human consciousness: "The human being is therefore, as a listening noting creature, naturally formed for language, and even a blind and dumb man, one sees, would inevitably invent language, if only he is not without feeling and deaf" (ibid: 98). Livingston underlines the importance of Herder's thought on language for his religious philosophy:

> Herder connects language and thought and links them to the historical development and individuality of all religions. Embedded in a particular culture, each religion is unique, individual. It is here that Herder's influence is most pronounced, namely in the field of historical hermeneutics or the interpretation and understanding of diverse peoples, cultures and religions. Like nations and cultures, religions are singular, living organisms. 'Who has noticed how *inexplicable* the *individuality* of one human being is … How different and particular all things are to an individual because they are seen by the eyes, measured by the soul, and felt by the heart of *that* individual?' And so it is with nations and religions. 'As disparate as heat is from cold, and as one pole is from another, so diverse are the various religions' (Livingston, 1997: 74).

Both Netland and Livingston stress the importance of Herder for the development of relativist thought. Netland reiterates Livingston's evaluation of the significance of Herder's *First Dialogue concerning National Religions* (1802), and emphasises that "Herder was greatly impressed by what he saw as the role of language in the development of consciousness, so that in a real sense we are creatures of our language and our world is 'created' through language" (Netland, 2001: 141).

> The import of Herder's cultural pluralism for religion and for Christianity emerges in his *First Dialogue concerning National Religions* (1802). The conversation between two friends turn to the pathos of one ancestral religion being forced upon a foreign people, with the consequence of the people not only losing their own religion but raising the question of the legitimacy of the universal claims

of Christianity. 'Would you be annoyed', the one friend asks, 'if I hold Christianity to be the religion *of all religions*, of all peoples?' The second friend replies, 'What distinguishes peoples?' Both have to agree that it is language and the shaping of a distinct physiogonomy of the corporate soul. But, then, does it not follow that the language in which the heart of a people speaks most deeply from its soul and most lovingly of the gods must be the language of its own mother tongue, the language 'in which we love, pray, and dream'? (Livingston, 1997: 141)

In his general writings, it was Herder's optimism that distinguished him from Kant. Pfleiderer believes that Herder "opened up new and magnificent points of view especially in those branches of study which were depreciated by Kant, viz. the emotional side of the life of the human soul and the development of mankind under the combined action of natural and spiritual forces in history" (Pfleiderer, 1923: 21). In spite of the various changes which Herder's thought went through over the period of his lifetime, "One unvarying drift does indeed pervade all these variations – a protest against the arrogance and poverty of the popular *Aufklarung,* which would let nothing pass but what was amenable to the calculations of the common understanding, and, without any sense for appreciating the productive forces and manifold phenomena of human history, sought to force all truth into the meagre moulds of its abstract intellectual conception" (ibid: 22). Herder's modern-day biographer writes concerning this: "Modern theological students of Herder's religious thought emphasize its productiveness for later generations, its influence upon Schleiermacher and the revival of religion that took place in the Romantic period, and its Protestant insistence upon the right of the individual to interpret the scriptures according to his own conscience, the Bible being regarded as basic in Herder's theology" (Clark, 1969: 210).

We see, therefore, a shift from a reliance on the mechanistic view of the created order to a greater appreciation of experience, of nature and feeling, with the danger always present that, in this new world of experiential validation, the tendency could be to not question experience itself or subject it to critical analysis. Goethe, asserts Randall, "Though he aspired after the stars, he never really saw them; he never rose far enough above the level of human experience to criticize it, to discern clearly what is and what is not of worth" (Randall, 1926: 400). It would be too simplistic to claim that Romanticism was a revolt entirely from the age of Reason (Barzun, 1969: 370). It had roots in seventeenth-century Pietism and eighteenth-century "sentimentality and nature worship" (ibid.). It is best

understood as an attempt to "enlarge the vision of the eighteenth century and to return to a wider, more richly diversified tradition" (Livingston, 1997: 83).

Friedrich Schleiermacher

Schleiermacher (1768-1834) had been educated by the pietistic Moravians, but struggled with both their theology and the restricted outlook which he felt they employed (Brandt, 1968: 6). He particularly struggled with christological doctrines, writing to his father in 1787 that "I cannot believe that he, who called himself the Son of Man, was the true eternal God" (ibid: 20). Brandt theorises that Schleiermacher was probably influenced by his pietistic background in three areas: firstly, Moravianism stressed the emotional aspect of religious faith and practice; secondly, religion was central to both personal and social life; and finally, in Moravian thought, abstract philosophy was distinguished from religion itself (ibid: 21).

Herder stressed the finding of God within human experience. In the English version of Schleiermacher's *Reden uber Die Religion* (1799), translated by John Oman originally in 1893 as *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* and reprinted with a foreword by Rudolph Otto in 1958, Schleiermacher states that "true religion is sense and taste for the Infinite" (Schleiermacher, 1958: 39). In his *Christliche Glaube* (1821–2), translated in 1928 by Mackintosh as *The Christian Faith*,[9] Schleiermacher expanded on his earlier view. In a section debating the relationship between knowing, feeling and doing, he concludes "The common element in all howsoever diverse expressions of piety, by which these are conjointly distinguished from all other feelings, or, in other words, the self-identical essence of piety, is this: the consciousness of being absolutely dependent, or, which is the same thing, of being in relation with God" (Schleiermacher, 1968: 12). In Otto's introduction to the 1958 reprint of *On Religion*, he credits Schleiermacher with having brought religion back to its "mainsprings" and to have incorporated it into intellectual life, following a dearth in the fortunes of faith in the midst of an otherwise creative milieu (Schleiermacher, 1958: vii). *On Religion* "aimed to recapture the position religion had lost in the intellectual world where it was now threatened with total oblivion" (ibid: ix).[10]

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9. Quotations in this chapter are taken from the 1968 reprint.
10. Eric Sharpe writes: "In addressing himself in this way to a work of apologetics, Otto was undertaking what he felt to be an important task, that of restating the Christian message in an essentially materialistic

The questions it framed were decisive: What is religion? In what spiritual faculties of man is it rooted? How does it arise? How does it emerge in history? What are 'religions'? What is Christianity? What in religion is valid in a 'natural' or 'positive' sense? What is the meaning of a religious community? And further: What is the relation of religion to moral behaviour? to knowledge? What are the conceptions and teachings of religion, and do they have any validity? (ibid: xiii)

In *The Christian Faith*, Schleiermacher applies his belief in faith as absolute dependence to the relationship between humanity and God and the very nature and character of God: "All attributes which we ascribe to God are to be taken as denoting not something special in God, but only something special in the manner in which the feeling of absolute dependence is to be related to him" (Schleiermacher, 1968: 194). Schleiermacher's systematic theology as a whole is beyond the scope of this chapter, but to understand his importance at the juncture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the question of religion, and especially for the development of the discipline of comparative religion, it is necessary to grasp the centrality of his emphasis on experience and feeling as the starting point for theology. To go back to the assessment, offered by Otto above, of the importance of his thought on the question "What are religions?", Otto also writes "Of no less importance were the questions raised with respect to the methods of scientific research in the field of religion: How is the essence of religion to be found – both in its general conceptions and in its 'concrete' individual forms" (Schleiermacher, 1958: xiii).

In Otto's opinion, Schleiermacher did not set out to promote a system of apologetics, in the sense that we understand the term, but,

> He wished to show that man is not wholly confined to knowledge and action, that the relationship of men to their environment – the world, being, mankind, events – is not exhausted in the mere perception or shaping of it. He sought to prove that if one experienced the environing world in a state of deep emotion, as intuition and feeling, and that if one were deeply affected by a sense of its eternal and abiding essence, to the point where one was moved to feelings of devotion, awe and reverence – then such an affective state was worth more than knowledge and action put together. (ibid: xix)

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world" (Sharpe, 1975: 162). Sharpe notes that Otto was concerned with developing a response to both Darwinism and Kant, "but there is yet no hint of an interest in the problems of comparative religion, or of the concern with the 'non-rational' which was to come to the fore in *The Idea of the Holy*" (ibid: 162, 163).

Schleiermacher's thought, Eric Sharpe notes, made it possible to recognise each religious tradition as "a *necessary* manifestation of the encounter between man and the infinite" and that as a result, "in time students of religion were led along these paths to attempt to understand each separate religious tradition on its own specific premises" (Sharpe, 1975: 20, 21). Later in his work *Comparative Religion* (1975), Sharpe cites Schleiermacher as one of the forerunners of those Christian theologians who "were all reasserting in various ways a 'Hellenic' attitude to religion over against a dominantly Hebraic tradition" (ibid: 146). Schleiermacher's work on hermeneutics was being used to interpret bodies of material from non-Judaeo-Christian religious traditions (ibid: 225, 226). In his Introduction to an edition of Schleiermacher's work on hermeneutics, Andrew Bowie claims that Schleiermacher developed his interest in hermeneutics having been asked to translate an account of research into an aboriginal tribe in New South Wales. It had been supposed by the author of the account that the tribe was so backward that it could have no religion at all, but Schleiermacher, on the basis of his work in *On Religion*, was convinced that "the tribe could yet have religious consciousness via their particular sense of participation in the universe" (Schleiermacher, 1998: xviii).

Schleiermacher sets out his thought with regards to non-Christian faiths clearly in *On Religion*:

> I invite you to study every faith professed by man, every religion that has a name and character. Though it may long ago have degenerated into a long series of empty customs, into a system of abstract ideas and theories, will you not, when you examine the original elements at the source, find that this dead dross was once the molten outpourings of the inner fire? Is there not in all religions more or less the true nature of religion, as I have presented it to you? Must not, therefore, each religion be one of the special forms which mankind, in some region of the earth and at some stage of development, has to accept? (Schleiermacher, 1958: 216)

In *The Christian Faith* he reflects on the status of other faiths in comparison with Christianity. What is distinctive about Christianity and to what extent do the truth claims of the Christian faith invalidate the truth claims of other religions?

> Our proposition excludes only the idea, which indeed is often met with, that the Christian religion (piety) should adopt towards at least most other forms of piety the attitude of the true towards the false. For if the religions belonging to the same stage as Christianity were entirely false, how could they have so much similarity to Christianity as to make the classification requisite? And if religions

which belonged to the lower stages contained nothing but error, how could it be possible for a man to pass from them to Christianity? Only the true, and not the false, can be a basis of receptivity for the higher truth of Christianity. The whole delineation which we are here introducing is based rather on the maxim that error never exists in and for itself, but always along with some truth, and that we have never fully understood it until we have discovered its connexion with truth, and the true thing to which it is attached. With this agrees what the apostle says even when he represents Polytheism as a perversion of the original consciousness of God which underlies it, and when, in this evidence of the longing which all these fancies have failed to satisfy, he finds an obscure presentiment of the true God.[11] (Schleiermacher, 1968: 33, 34)

So, while the Christian faith is superior, if all other forms of faith contained nothing but absolute error, then there would be no means for progression from polytheistic observance to the monotheistic truth of Christianity. Contrasting the monotheism of Christianity with that of Judaism and Islam, Schleiermacher concludes, "Thus, Christianity ... stands higher than either of those two other forms, and takes its place as the purest form of Monotheism which has appeared in history" (ibid: 37, 38).

In christological and soteriological terms, Schleiermacher, viewing sin as *God-lessness* or *God-forgetfulness*, a state of independence *from* rather than absolute dependence *on*, God, (ibid: 54) understands redemption as the restoration of that dependence (ibid: 388). So, in redemption "The Redeemer assumes believers into the power of His God-consciousness, and His redemptive activity" (ibid: 425). This redeemer is "like all men in virtue of the identity of human nature, but distinguished from them all by the constant potency of his God-consciousness, which was a veritable existence of God in him" (ibid: 385). Gerrish writes "In at least three respects his conception of God's relationship to the world remained unconventional, if not heretical" (Gerrish, 1988: 138). "To many of Schleiermacher's contemporaries, it was astonishing that anyone who had so transformed the traditional picture of God could fulfil the office of an evangelical preacher" (ibid.). Barth viewed his christology in terms of "degree christology", with Christ having a "quantitative superiority, dignity and significance" (Barth, 1972: 471). Sin is simply "the restricted awareness of the higher life" (ibid: 472). Livingston, in the conclusion of his treatment of Schleiermacher, while acknowledging that the theologian's "reconstruction of Christian faith left serious questions" (Livingston, 1997: 105), nevertheless offers this

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11. At this point in the text of *The Christian Faith*, Schleiermacher references Romans 1:21ff and Acts 17:27–30.

summary: "Schleiermacher's experiential conception of religion also gave considerable impetus to the comparative study of religions and to the scientific analysis and classification of religious phenomena – for example, in the work of the twentieth-century historians of religion, Ernst Troeltsch and Rudolf Otto" (ibid.). Gerrish credits him with bringing dogmatics "closer to what we should today call 'the humanistic study of religion'. Indeed Schleiermacher's theology exercised a powerful influence on the development of self-consciously non-theological ways of studying religion that do not always admit their parentage" (Gerrish, 1988: 124).[12] In *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, Smart credits Schleiermacher with enabling philosophical and religious thinking to break free from the bonds imposed by Kant and to move towards a greater understanding of experience of the transcendent (Smart, 1977: 621). J. Verkuyl, while identifying a number of weaknesses in his missiology, still claims "Friedrich Daniel Schleiermacher was the first theologian in the great century of missions who thought about the position of the science of missions within the wider discipline of theology" (Verkuyl, 1978: 6). Schleiermacher's influence on the thinking of twentieth century missiologists who engaged with Edinburgh 1910 will be discussed in chapter six.

The significance of Hegel

In proposing a history of religions based on the principle of development, Hegel's approach to the philosophy of religion was to view stages of consciousness of Spirit as supplying to the human subject the determinate forms of religion. For Hegel, "the history of religion constitutes an ordering of the logical moments directed toward an end, an ordering determined by the concept itself" (Jaeschke, 1990: 265). Hegel himself writes, "Definite forms of religion ... being stages on the road followed by Spirit are imperfect" (Hegel, 1895, I: 76). Accordingly, they are both limited and finite (ibid.). The religions, Hegel argues, "as they have followed upon one another, have not arisen accidentally. It is Spirit which rules inner life, and to see only chance here after the fashion of the historical school is absurd (ibid.). The essence of religion, what Hegel terms the "essential moments of the notion or conception of religion" is manifest at each stage at which religions exist (ibid.). A history of religion emerges out of the progressive development of

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12. Brad Stetson, in discussing Schleiermacher's idea of "the feeling of absolute independence", makes the point that here Schleiermacher is speaking of a "universal human consciousness" (Stetson, 1994: 6) and "This feeling of absolute dependence is not unique to Christianity or any other religious tradition; rather for Schleiermacher, it is an integral part of each human being – even without respect to the extent that a person feels religious. In his view, each religion was a manifestation of this feeling" (ibid: 6, 7).

religion from one stage to another (ibid.). While not "our religion" (ibid.), these religions are, nevertheless, "included in ours as essential, although as subordinate moments, which cannot miss having in them absolute truth" (ibid.).

All religions, therefore, have within them truth and reason, and at their lower stages of development "the moments or the notion or conception of religion" are present, "though as yet in the shape of anticipations or presentiments, as natural flowers and creations of fancy which have, so to speak, blossomed forth by chance. What determines the characteristics of these stages, however, through their entire history, is the determinateness of the notion itself, which can at no stage be absent" (ibid: 77). As a result, "in them we do not have to do with what is foreign to us, but with what is our own (ibid.). In Hegel's philosophy, this notion, or conception, has to "attain to consciousness" (ibid: 262). It cannot exist merely as a thought, but must objectify itself (ibid.). First, religion is present in the consciousness. Then the notion must attain "self-realisation" (ibid.). While "it may be said of all religions that they are religions and that they correspond with the notion or conception of religion" (ibid.), they are still limited, and so they do not correspond with the notion, but they do contain it (ibid.). They are "particular moments of the notion, and for that very reason they do not correspond with it, for it does not exist in an actual shape in them" (ibid.).

The development of religion is explained by Hegel in his *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (1832, 1840), from which I have quoted above. He divides Determinate Religion into two areas – the Religion of Nature and the Religion of Spiritual Individuality. There is a progressive development from the immediacy of man's religious consciousness, immediacy having to do with "sensuous natural knowledge and natural volition" and this elevates to the status of magic (ibid: 265). Consciousness, aware of its naturalness, "distinguishes from this the True, the Essential, in which this naturalness, this finiteness has no value and is known to be a nullity" (ibid.). Progression goes on to elevate spirit above the natural, leading to the place where "God is now defined as the absolute Power or Substance" (ibid.). Growing to a knowledge of Spirit as absolute truth, the "rising up" (ibid.) continues to the point where "God, in whatever way He may be defined, brings Himself into relation with the subject which has thus lifted itself" (ibid: 264).

In dealing with the category of the Religion of Spiritual Individuality, Hegel makes the point that "These religions correspond in reverse order to those preceding them" (ibid., II: 169) In Volume II of *Lectures,* he traces development from Jewish monotheism, to Greek immanentism and then to Roman polytheism. Revealed religion develops because "Manifestation, development and determination or specification do not go on *as infinitum,* and do not cease *accidentally*" (ibid., I: 83). Spirit unfolds itself to the point where it "has now no longer individual forms, determinations of itself, before it, as it unfolds itself" (ibid.). Spirit no longer knows itself as Spirit in a limited way but has attained its highest goal, its potentiality has been fulfilled (ibid.). So it reaches the point of "the perfect, the absolute religion in which it is revealed what Spirit, what God is; this is the Christian religion" (ibid: 84). "Revealed religion is manifested religion, because in it God has become wholly manifest ... revealed religion, which was hitherto still veiled, and did not exist in its truth, came at its own time" (ibid: 84, 85).

Peter Hodgson believes "The suggestion that all religions mediate the truth and that they are all included in 'our' religion as 'essential though subordinate moments' amounted to a revolutionary insight. Although ultimately it did not transcend a grandiose Christian imperialism, it led Hegel to consider all expressions of religion with the utmost seriousness, and he developed a vast knowledge of world religions, flawed only by the inadequate scientific basis for the study of religions that prevailed in his time" (Hodgson, 1988: 94). This was the case even though "Hegel considered all the world religions except Christianity to be essentially phenomena of the past, living on only so far as they have been sublated in the Revelatory Religion" (ibid: 95). Lauer implies that Hegel's developmental process, which culminates in revelation, has its roots in Hegel's notion of the comprehensibility of God (or his non-incomprehensibility) to the human mind. So, Hegel is saying that "God, who is infinitely self-knowing Spirit, reveals himself *to* man, to the human mind and that this revelation, indispensable as it is to any knowing of reality, is comprehended. If not, it is no revelation; comprehension of the revelation is part and parcel of the revelation, whether of finite or of infinite being" (Lauer, 1982: 4). There is the fear, Lauer admits, that Hegel may have "overlogicized" God, leading to the "degradation" of transcendence. He cites Ricoeur's evaluation of Hegel's teleology as leading to "no transcendence, only the subsumption of all transcendence in a thoroughly mediated self-knowledge" (ibid.); but, on the other hand, writes Lauer, there is equally a

fear of making God logically incomprehensible and also "logically reprehensible" (ibid: 5).

James Yerkes' analysis of Hegel's christology concludes that Kant, Schleiermacher and Hegel all shared what Eugene TeSelle called an "archetype" christology, in that Jesus is "the manifestation or actualisation of the archetypal idea for all humanity" (Yerkes, 1983: 215). Yerkes stresses the concern that Hegel had for envisaging Jesus as having "a *personal* and *present* religious significance for human self-understanding in the ongoing economy of God's redemptive work in the world. The emphasis was not on the Jesus of the past, but on the Jesus who, religiously speaking, remains decisively significant by coming to us in the present" (ibid.). It was Hegel's apparent ambiguity about Christianity that created a dichotomy in how he was understood, with him being seen both as "archcritic of Christianity and its modern philosophic saviour" (Livingston, 1997: 126). Hegel's significance and legacy through the nineteenth century is seen in the formation of distinct sets of approaches to his philosophy.

The Right-Wing, or Centre Hegelians in Germany, termed the Neo-Hegelians in Britain, relied on Hegelian thought to various degrees to reconstruct Christianity. John and Edward Caird are perhaps the most prominent of the British Neo-Hegelians. Both believed strongly in the conception of Christianity as "the final or absolute religion in that it was the historical synthesis of the philosophical antithetical objective and subjective consciousness – the absolute religion in which God is known not as external object or highest subject but as the immanent unitary ground of all knowing and being, of subject and object" (ibid: 134). On the left wing, there arose the 'Young Hegelians', who intended to use Hegelian philosophy to undermine Christianity; this wing consisted of, amongst others, D. F. Strauss, Bruno Bauer, Ludwig Feurbach and Karl Marx (ibid: 127). It was Strauss who, in the nineteenth century, would explore the relationship between the historical Jesus and the absolute truth claims made by the Christ of faith. Using Hegel's christology as a tool, he, according to Rupp, rejects the idea that "the independent speculative truth of Christianity can in turn support the historical claims of the Gospels" (Rupp, 1974: 142).

According to Hans Küng, "With Strauss the split of Hegel's school into right and left became a fact. He was the first to give sharp expression to the thesis, which has gripped

the attention of christology right down to the present day, that there is a fundamental difference between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. In this he was concerned just as much with supplying a corrective to Hegel's speculative christology as with the intricacies of the christological dogma itself" (Küng, 1987: 469). In Küng's view, both Hegel and Strauss promoted a christology from above; but, in his interpretation of Hegel, Strauss had actually formulated a christology from below. Hegel was familiar with the idea of the historical Christ but he was more concerned with the 'idea' than he was with the historical person, more focused on the realisation of absolute Spirit in the life of Jesus. Strauss, however, believed that the 'Idea' would not place its fullness in a single individual, and he highlighted the inconsistencies of the rationalist and suprarationalist interpretations of the life of Jesus, whilst also mythologising the entire life. Added to this, he ignored any evidence of the historical in the gospel accounts (ibid: 470–73).

The direction taken by Strauss was just one of the many approaches taken in response to Hegelian theory. Many did not follow Hegel to the letter, but made use of his conceptual framework to formulate their own philosophy. The Idealist stance "made prominent the conception of evolution or development. The unity of existence was viewed as a unity of process ... At each stage of the advance the immanent purpose and spiritual significance of the whole became more apparent" (Storr, 1913: 146). This same concept of evolution produced the rise of the historical method, it placed the individual human in a social and evolutionary context, no longer merely individual, but understood in the light of "all the influences, physical, moral, social, which have been playing upon him from the day of his first appearance upon earth" (ibid: 147). In its teleology, Idealism stressed immanence rather than transcendence (ibid: 148). Storr emphasises that English theology did not feel the greater influence of German theology until post-1860. When Idealism did exercise its sway, beginning with Schleiermacher, it was evolutionary in its impulse and sought to trace development from the roots up. As a result "each of the great post-Kantian idealist philosophers tried to demonstrate the organic nature of truth, and to frame a system which unfolded from a fundamental principle" (ibid: 151). Theology, allying itself with idealism and with philosophy in general, was emboldened to underpin apologetics with a philosophical basis in order to establish theistic foundations. So, the final years of the nineteenth century "witnessed a large output of apologetic literature, which treated of subjects lying on the borderland of science, religion and philosophy" (ibid.). Immanentist thought, with its focus on divine immanence" was nothing less than a revolution in

thought to abandon a deistic and mechanical view of God's relation to the universe, and to substitute for it the idea of the universe as a growing organism, pulsating with life, and indwelt by the divine Spirit" (ibid: 152). But it was the christological problem that stood at the fore of theology in the nineteenth century. Hegel's view of God "perpetually incarnating Himself in humanity" and finding, in humanity, "His fullest expression" (ibid.) was designed to bridge the gap between God and that same humanity. What then, however, of the historical figure, the historical person of Christ? The core issue became the relationship of the "eternal to the temporal, of the absolute to the finite and historical" (ibid.)

> Here was a challenge to the theologian to investigate anew the historical Christ, and having found Him, to show that the doctrinal interpretation of His person, given by orthodox theology, could be sustained. Idealism had been baffled by the christological problem. It was the feeling that these speculative Christologies had neglected the historical basis of Christianity, and had been too ready to treat facts as if they were ideas, which led to a reaction, and set theologians upon the path of detailed historical enquiry. The central problem, then, was the reconciliation of the Christ of history with the Christ of dogma. In addition there was the Christ of experience, whose redeeming activity through the centuries was the cardinal doctrine of Schleiermacher's theology ... The issue thus thrust to the front by speculation has been kept in that position by the comparative study of religion, which has shown that what differences Christianity from all other systems is the place in it occupied by its Founder. (ibid: 152, 153)

In fact, Linda Woodhead believes that the evolutionary theology of the later nineteenth century owed less to Darwin than it did to Hegel and Idealist philosophy (Woodhead, 2004: 373).

"Hegel's philosophy", writes Kereszty, "became a challenge to modern theology similar to what Gnosticism was for the ancient Church. In both cases, God is reduced to the human spirit, knowledge of God to self-knowledge, and salvation to the understanding that self-knowledge is the knowledge of God" (Kereszty, 2002: 293, 294). However, in contrast to Gnosticism, Hegel does not propose a rejection of the world, but "existence in the world of nature has a value to be preserved even when the Absolute returns to Itself through negating the world of nature. In fact, it is by going through the phase of nature that the Absolute becomes truly and fully real" (ibid: 294).

Livingston maintains that it is Hegel's depth of understanding of the interdependence of nature, history and God, that is part of his importance and part of his legacy. He emphasised the central role of process, with time and history not just accidental, but essential parts of reality. So, his work was vital for appreciating the historical development of Christian doctrine. He formulated an overview of human progress through the stages of religious life, and therefore of the evolution of consciousness. "Hegel's phenomenology proved therefore to be of critical importance for the scientific study of religion that emerged in the latter decades of the nineteenth century" (Livingston, 1997: 138).

In conclusion, then, the foundations of both christological and missiological thinking were found, not in late nineteenth-century reactions from missionary strategy and encounters, but rather in the philosophical epistemology of figures like Kant, Hegel, Herder and Schleiermacher. It was their attempts to engage with foundational principles for understanding the role and function of religion and religions that led to the formulation of a theory of religions which set each in its place. These seminal thinkers viewed Christianity, at an early stage in the development of a theology of religions, as being 'amongst the faiths' and set out to interpret not only what this meant for Christianity itself, but also what the relationship could be on a philosophical basis between it and the faith systems which it encountered. Building on both Platonism and immanentism, Hegel attempted to find a way to explain the emergence of Spirit throughout history, something which later missionary theologians could harness to understand the role of the Logos and of the notion of fulfilment.

In the next chapter, we turn, having set out the philosophical underpinnings of the era, to examine in closer detail the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910, and to use its philosophical pre-history as a platform from which to understand its character and its theological and philosophical assumptions.

Chapter 4

Hidden in Plain Sight: The Implicit Christological, Cultural
and Missiological Character of Edinburgh 1910

Having examined the christological and missiological landscapes in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, I now want use the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 itself ('the Conference') as a vantage point from which to view both the contemporaneous debates in the fields of christology and missiology, and, retrospectively from that period, the antecedent events from about 1830 up to 1900. The Conference will, then, act as a 'crossroads' from which the development in both disciplines will be examined. Hogg, as we have seen in Chapter One, described Edinburgh 1910 as "a lens catching diffused beams of light from a century's attempts at missionary co-operation, focussing them, and projecting them for the future in a united, meaningful and determinative pattern" (Hogg, 1952: 98). A better analogy, I feel, is to view Edinburgh as a river into which many streams flow; in the period from 1830 upwards, the thought of F. D. Maurice, of Friedrich Max Müller, the emerging theologies in an Indian context from the likes of Farquhar, MacNicol, Ramabhai and others, the Alexandrine christology of Westcott, the incarnational theology of the *Lux Mundi* authors, developments in the fields of history, anthropology, sociology and science, all contributed to a mighty swelling of the various tributaries which flowed into the depths of christology and missiology in general. Theological in their character both disciplines might be, but they were still subject to external formative influences.

Edinburgh could have been a confluence where the currents and eddies of decades of debate and reflection might have found a place to flow and meet; a place, which, while affording a limited platform for discussion, might, nevertheless, have offered an impetus for an accelerated engagement with the highly innovative and, at times, radical theories and accommodations being worked out by practitioners in the field. In its decision to exclude discussion of doctrinal issues, the conduit which Edinburgh might have been, a route by means of which new ideas and new approaches in the fields of missiology and

christology could have been transported and mediated, instead became an outlet which was, to some extent, 'dammed'. While undoubtedly some seepage of the vast resources of the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century christological and missiological debates did occur, albeit in a controlled manner, this unique gathering, which had garnered to itself so much research and deliberation from a worldwide constituency and which had accumulated so much collective wisdom and reflection on praxis, was, perhaps, the victim of its own desire for consensus. In essence, theology could never be far from the debates and discussions of Edinburgh, since theological rationale formed the basis of its formulations and its very character.

Hedlund, in pointing out that Edinburgh could not be regarded as an a-theological environment, balances this by observing that

> Edinburgh must be understood in light of its times. An unrealistic optimism was typical of orthodoxy (post-millennialism) as well as of liberalism (Schleiermacher). Nor was Edinburgh a conference on theology! It was a missionary conference, and its primary contribution was to missionary strategy. Discussion of ecumenical and theological issues tends to obscure the true nature of the Edinburgh gathering. "In 1910 only a few non-missionaries attended". As Ralph Winter points out, there was need for neither a creedal statement nor for discussion of points of theological disagreement since this was a meeting of mission strategists and not a Church conference. The chief importance of Edinburgh lies in this fact. (Hedlund, 1993: 34, 35)

Hedlund makes an assumption here, though, that theology might not be a pertinent topic for either a missionary conference or a gathering of missionary strategists to discuss and he seems to relegate the status of a missionary conference to a position somewhat below that of a Church conference in the consideration of theological issues. His view neglects to take account of the fact that matters of doctrine were excluded from discussion at Edinburgh not so much because they were not considered pertinent but because they were not considered prudent. This exclusion should not be thought of purely in terms of Anglican prohibition, since the exclusion had been decided upon in the very preparation for the event, with the proviso being established that there could be no resolutions carried which might involve "questions of doctrine or Church polity with regard to which the Churches or Societies taking part in the conference differ among themselves" (Hogg, 1952: 112). Bishop Gore had queried the universal application of this principle and needed to be satisfied as to its efficacy and surety (ibid.).

However, Robson, in his account in Volume IX of the Conference records makes clear that there were three major considerations around the setting up of the constitution of the event and the determination of its character. Firstly, since the various missionary societies involved were all participating in very different and diverse kinds of work, the focus of the Conference would need to be on matters in which they could all have a united interest. Secondly, discussion needed to be confined for purely practical reasons and not every issue could be covered. Thirdly, " no expression of opinion should be sought from the conference on any matter involving any ecclesiastical or doctrinal question on which those taking part differed among themselves" (WMC IX, 1910: 8). Therefore, it is important not to interpret Edinburgh by applying unrealistic criteria of judgement towards it without giving cognisance to its situation within its own chronological and cultural framework. Hedlund makes a good point with reference to the *raison d'être* of the Conference and it is unrealistic to expect that the organisers of Edinburgh 1910 should have acted with twenty-first-century missiological priorities and awareness in mind, but it could at the very least be said that excluding theological issues as the focus of overt debate was a short-sighted approach, which sacrificed debate of very real and present issues for the short-term gain of consensus.

Nevertheless, in spite of the lack of this overt focus on theology, it is still possible to view Edinburgh in its theological, missiological and christological universe and to use it as a point from which to examine missiological and christological debates and developments, their interdependency and their co-relationships, all the more so because many of the key figures within the reassessments and reinterpretations of 'traditional' missionary approaches and christologies had some links with Edinburgh. Many did not, but were figures of influence within the world of theology, who had a strong impact on the very missionaries and mission strategists who laboured in the mission fields or who contributed their thoughts to the Conference in the form of replies to questionnaires and participation in debates. In this chapter and the next, I turn first of all to examine Edinburgh 1910 itself, and then will move on in further chapters to retrospectively trace some of the strands which converge there. My approach will be to examine themes and trends which feature in the discussions and which have resonances in debates in the wider field.

A theological overview and analysis of the commission documents

To attempt to deal with each commission at great length would be impossible for the purposes of this thesis. Each report runs to several hundred pages, and there are nine volumes in all. I will, however, give an overall analysis of and examination of themes and trends which emerge and which give some picture of the theological, missiological and christological character of the Conference. As will also become clear, cultural issues are very pertinent and central to a comprehensive understanding of the whole ethos and character of the event.

The Report of Commission I, with its supplement, the *Presentation and Discussion of the Report in the Conference on 15th June 1910*, is, like all nine Conference volumes, quite lengthy, extending to 436 pages without the index. Commission IV is generally the most theological of all the reports, since it deals with matters which pertain much more to doctrine and belief than do the others, and it is possible to discern much more in the proceedings of Commission IV, both christological and missiological resonances. However, since little attention has been given to all eight commissions as a whole, particularly in the context of their theological character, I will examine each of the reports, but will give greater attention to commissions I and IV, dealing in more detail with Commission IV. This treatment of the various commissions will help to set Commission IV in its christological context with reference to the other commissions.

Commission I

I will begin my analysis of Commission I by focusing on the Appendix, rather than on the body of the Report itself. The former Professor of Missions in the University of Halle, Gustav Warneck, had been prevented by infirmity from attending the Conference. Therefore he wrote a letter to Mott, which was included in Volume I of the Conference proceedings (WMC I) and which forms an appendix to the section on 'Discussion'. It is fair, I think, to assume that Mott regarded it as important enough to share 'as if' Warneck himself were making a speech from the floor of the Conference.

Warneck makes several points, among them the observations that "The extension of the evangelistic campaigns must not be allowed to set in the background the nurturing and training of the native congregations" (WMC I, 1910: 434) and "the principal strength of missions lies in the native congregations" (ibid.). He highlights the challenges offered to the spread of the Gospel by Islam and cautions about the misappropriation of scarce workers in fulfilment of the 'watchword' "occupation of the whole world in this present generation", since to send Christian missionaries into certain areas where there would be little hope of success would be to dissipate their strength and abilities which could be used in far more fruitful fields (ibid: 435). His most interesting statements, however, occur in the final section of his letter, where he writes:

> The New Testament contains no regulative prescriptions concerning missionary methods, but it does contain a regulative definition of the content of the Gospel, which is our commission to bring to the non-Christian world. The manner in which we are to bring this Gospel to the adherents of the different non-Christian religions belonging to different races and to different stages of culture, in such a way as to make it intelligible to them and to win their hearts, forms one of the most important problems of missionary methods, and this in two directions; first, with regard to the missionary attitude towards the non-Christian religions; and secondly, with regard to the missionary shaping of the Christian message. We are endeavouring at present with great earnestness really to understand the modes of thought peculiar to foreign peoples, to find points of contact which help us to build spiritual bridges from us to them and to bring into action those vital forces of the Gospel in which its world-conquering power lies. Yet by this endeavour to draw close to the hearts of the non-Christian peoples and to lead them into the centre of the Gospel, we dare not allow ourselves to be betrayed into the mistake of altering the content of the Gospel message as it was proclaimed to the apostles. (ibid: 435, 436)

Essentially, Warneck touches on a key area of tension running right through the discussions of the Conference and indeed in the wider field of missiology. How, indeed, could the Gospel be made 'intelligible" to "different races" and those in "different stages of culture"? How could "points of contact which help us to build spiritual bridges from us to them" be established, and how could Christian missionaries "draw close to the hearts of the non-Christian peoples" and "lead them into the centre of the Gospel" without making "the mistake of altering the content of the Gospel message as it was proclaimed by the apostles"? It was certainly not just Warneck who was pondering this dilemma. The Gospel was also not a mere depersonalised message, but the 'Gospel of Christ', therefore it was inseparably linked with the person of Christ and the doctrines of

the person of Christ. The tone of Warneck's letter reflects the paradoxical nature of the challenge. It is almost as if he understands the challenge in all of its starkness, but shrinks from an answer which might, indeed, lead inexorably towards the alteration of the message which he evidently fears. "The main source of our strength", he concludes, "is not in the method but in the message of this Gospel" (ibid: 436).

In the quotation above, Warneck identifies two further challenges. The first has to do with "the missionary attitude towards the non-Christian religions", a subject dealt with admirably and comprehensively by Kenneth Cracknell in his *Justice, Courtesy and Love* (1995), but the second challenge is, perhaps, the deepest and the greatest as it has to do with the "missionary shaping of the Christian message" and it is the relationship between the four elements of this sentence which reflects the wider concern occupying the minds and hearts of many missionaries in the field. First of all there is the "message", something to be communicated, something which will inform and build up, and this message is characterised as "Christian"; therefore it is intimately linked to christology and to the person of Christ. Then there is the missionary charged with the promulgation of that message. But there is also a "shaping" process, which is vital and which may alter the message for ill or for good, depending on one's point of view. The alteration may make the message more intelligible, but in doing so, it may change the very essence of the message. Warneck has, in a sense, 'hit the nail on the head' with regard to the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference. It is almost as if the issues he raises become 'the elephant in the room', because they are at the very heart of the challenges being inevitably faced by the gathering, the logical outcomes of attempts to communicate the Gospel message. Warneck raises fundamental theological, missiological and christological concerns and brings them right into the heart of the gathering. In later chapters, I will examine how many different missionary thinkers tried to wrestle with these fundamental concerns, doing so at many points along the spectrum. Some were able to go further than others in rethinking their christology and seeking to make it more intelligible, or trying to shape the missionary message in ways which would build the bridges Warneck wishes for. One cannot compare these early thinkers to those who in more modern times have sought to formulate radical and innovative christologies, particularly in a pluralist framework, but they were pioneers who saw the need for a reshaping of the Christian message and the person of Christ and who set about, often in an embryonic form, a process of

reinterpretation and reshaping. Like Warneck, they saw 'the elephant in the room' and could not ignore it.

Professor Andrew Walls, in a paper delivered to commemorate the upcoming centenary of Edinburgh 1910, describes Warneck's intervention as "the most notable questioning voice" (Walls, 2005: 5). Walls writes:

> On theology, Edinburgh 1910 has little to say. The conference ground rules, of course, precluded the introduction of topics known to be controversial among the participants: Even so, it seems remarkable today that so many people, representing such a wide range of theological views could accept that they were agreed as to what the Gospel was. It seems equally remarkable that they could all accept that evangelism, translation, education, medicine, literature, industrial training and 'women's work' were simply different methods of carrying it. The most notable questioning voice was that of the German missiologist, Gustav Warneck. Warneck was not present at Edinburgh, but sent a long letter to Mott, reproduced as an appendix to the Report of Commission I. Edinburgh 1910 reflects a certain confidence that, whatever issues may divide Christendom, there is a consensual theological deposit that is the common heritage of Christians. (ibid.)

But, of course, Warneck's letter illuminates to a great extent the assumptions and hidden faultlines of Edinburgh 1910, because how could 1,200 delegates representing thousands of other missionaries and a myriad of theological viewpoints be assumed to subscribe to a "consensual theological deposit" or, indeed, to "agree what the Gospel was" in a forum that did not discuss the very character of that Gospel or the merits of theological stances in any deep way? Eric Sharpe cautions about accepting the face value of the commission reports, which taken as they are, are certainly reflective of a remarkable degree of consensus.

> But though there has been no lack of commentators on Edinburgh 1910, most historians have been content to treat the subject summarily, rather than in detail. Here there are certain facts which it would be well to bear in mind. The nine volumes of the conference report, though invaluable as the expression of the mind of the respective commissions, represent bodies of material *after* having undergone a process of co-ordination and systematization. (Sharpe, 1965: 275)

Sharpe also makes the relevant point that, with regards to Commission IV, which dealt with *The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions*, Mott, in an article written for the publication *The East and the West* in 1908, had somewhat overused (in Sharpe's

opinion) the term 'apologetic'. The term "occurs no less than four times in seventeen lines" (ibid: 277). Sharpe observes that the term does not occur anywhere else in Mott's account, "and it is clearly the case that he was using it in the specific sense of the communication of the Gospel to adherents of non-Christian religions" (ibid.). Sharpe notes in relation to Mott's use of the term something similar to what has been written above in relation to Warneck,

> It has a twofold purpose in Mott's words, '... to avoid unnecessary opposition and objection and to commend most strongly the Christian truth'. In other words, how was the Christian to preach the Gospel without giving *unnecessary* offence, and at the same time without in any way compromising the claims of Christ? The crux of the matter lay in the missionary's attitude; hence the fifth question in the Commission IV questionnaire asked, 'What attitude should the Christian preacher take toward the religion of the people among whom he labours?'

> The questionnaire was sent to a select group of missionaries – a fact which must be borne in mind when judging the representativeness or otherwise of the commission's conclusions. Of the sixty-five missionaries working in the Hindu milieu (those with whom we are more closely concerned), eight only were representative of Continental societies, or of Continental origin; eleven were Indians. The remainder were either British or American. (ibid.)

Sharpe appears to understand both Mott's desire not to give offence and his wish to preach the Gospel of Christ in an uncompromising manner as being answered in the context of 'attitude', but Warneck seems to draw a distinction between "missionary attitude" and the "missionary shaping of the Christian message", viewing them as two separate issues. While they may be linked, Warneck would appear to make a more shrewd distinction and to be more aware of the theological and christological implications of this distinction for missionary practice.

The sense of consensus around Edinburgh 1910 is all-pervading. It is the one single issue which is emphasised over and over again. Gairdner, in giving an account of the deliberations of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference at their meeting in July 1908, describes "Complete harmony and a sense of the guiding presence of God – which were later so noticeable at Edinburgh – were given as an earnest to that Committee, and enables it so to work that by the end of those four days, the foundations of the conference had been well and truly laid" (Gairdner, 1910: 19). He surmises that the unity of those attending the conference might help bring about a long-term unity, "the unity of

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a One Catholic Church" (ibid: 34). In relation to all of the above, Hedlund refers to the view of Arthur Johnston that even "Authority became a matter of consensus" (Hedlund, 1993: 34)

Interestingly, Warneck had also sent his comments to be read at the Ecumenical Missionary Conference at New York in 1900. William Hutchison, a historian of religion at Harvard, highlighted the unhappiness of continental missiologists with the attitude of their British and American counterparts. The continentals believed that the "English speaking activists" were only interested in "numbers and publicity and quick results; they had no conception of the thoroughness and irenicism of the continental approach to missions" (Hutchison, 1987: 133). As a result of the continental delegates' negative experiences at the 1889 conference, Warneck was not inclined to attend New York and, as he did at Edinburgh, he sent a letter.

Warneck's paper complained not only about the rashness of the watchword, but about the propensity 'chiefly noticeable in many English and American mission fields', to export Western language and culture along with Christianity ... Warneck pointed out that Christ 'bids us "go" into all the world, not "fly" '; that Jesus likened the Kingdom of Heaven to a farmer's field, not to a hothouse, and that our Lord did not command anything sounding like 'Go ye and teach English to all nations.'

Some of Warneck's reprimands were, apparently, too much for the conference managers, and were simply edited out of the version that was read ... Mott and Wilder, after a two hour visit with the man in April 1899, rejoiced that they had formed a solid friendship and had also persuaded Warneck to modify his opposition. Perhaps they had, but Warneck subsequently recorded his strong and comprehensive dissent ...

Someone was not listening. On the American side, leaders like Mott, aloft with their own vision and too busy with organizational matters to study Continental languages or cultural and religious styles, appeared to regard Warneck as a somewhat isolated problem in public relations, not as the voice of broad constituency or serious ideological alternative. (ibid: 133, 134)

Warneck, according to the writer on missiology J. Verkuyl, in his general dogmatic theology viewed Christianity as "the complete and final revelation of God ... [and] the absolute religion" (Verkuyl, 1987: 27). Other religions have "hints of truth and intimations of salvation", but "Christianity alone possesses the full truth and salvation" (ibid.). Oldham had studied under Warneck, and Mott had been associated with him for a

long time. The establishment of a Continuation Committee at Edinburgh to carry on the work of the Conference owed much in its character and make-up to a plan put forward by Warneck as far back as before the London Missionary Conference of 1888 (Hopkins, 1979: 359–62).

However, Warneck's caution seems to reflect a difference in perspective between the Anglo-American axis and that of the continentals. Warneck was nervous of the 'sloganising' of the Americans, in particular. Yates explains Warneck's stance:

> Mission involves discipling the nations and the apostles did not rush from place to place, but organised churches and established and visited them. Nor were ideas of 'hastening the Parousia' by jettisoning tried missionary methods, to be accepted: certainly, in both New Testament times and today, there was and is an incentive in looking towards the return of Christ, but a whole eschatological program had to be fulfilled before the fullness of the gentiles is gathered in. Warneck was clearly worried by the accounts of Mott's travelogues (144 colleges and universities have been visited etc.) and the whole activist tendency, which, he feared, would lead to a reaction against all mission. Rhetoric, watchwords, slogans (Schlagworte) could dangerously mislead and distort … In whatever hands, however, 'the widely flaunted watchwords, no matter how variously interpreted, served to epitomise the optimistic self-confidence of a rapidly expanding Anglo-Saxon empire. Both the optimism amounting to utopianism, and the Anglo-Saxon constituent were equally unwelcome to thoughtful Continentals like Warneck. (Yates, 1996: 18, 20)

The very title of Commission I proposes a certain theological world-view. We have seen that the original title of the commission was 'Carrying the Gospel to All the World', but this was changed in the light of the narrowing of the agenda, which followed discussion on what could be regarded as non-Christian fields of work. The new title, however, betrays one of those theological assumptions which seemed to go unquestioned at Edinburgh. Kosuke Koyama observes that Edinburgh 1910 "contained within itself the elements of its breakdown. The reason for this must be that Edinburgh 1910 was basically a missiological monologue within the Christian West, though the monologue was sincere and accompanied by many prayers" (Koyama, 2002: 2). Koyama goes on to make the point that "The missionary geography of the two worlds, Christian and non-Christian, was a facile orientation which eventually made Christian dedication, though fervent, unable to communicate, and its material resources, though rich, ineffective" (ibid.). Edinburgh perpetuated, according to Koyama, a 'two-world' view, which had a distinctly Augustinian character to it, thereby creating a 'conflictive dualism'. The

Augustinian view supposes that there are two worlds, "one pious, the other impious" (ibid: 3). The two-world distinction has theological underpinnings, according to Koyama: "The theology that supported this missionary geography was twofold. First, there is the conviction that human salvation is possible *only* in the name of Jesus Christ. Other religions, great and small, were seen as obstacles and menaces to the missionary effort of spreading the Kingdom of Christ. Second was their faith in God who is the great missioner"(ibid: 2).

Koyama's assertion that Edinburgh 1910 was essentially a "missiological monologue with the Christian West" is an interesting one since it encapsulates a certain pessimism as to the ultimate efficacy of a conference bound on many sides. We have seen how it bound itself theologically, but to a great extent it also did so culturally.

> Out of 1,200 delegates only seventeen were from younger churches. They came not as representatives of their own communions but of Western missionary societies. Nevertheless, at Edinburgh they had an influence out of all proportion to their numbers. From an Indian, V. S. Azariah, and a Chinese, Cheng Ching-yi, came Edinburgh's two best-remembered speeches. Non-Occidentals were few in number, but they were extremely able men, and they were vocal. Unfeigned interest and enthusiasm attended their words. Only one person from Asia led a devotional service, but among the twenty-six evening presentations, three gave major addresses. The outstanding contribution of these representatives from the East came in the debates on commission reports, where their insight, candour and ability made a profound impression. (Hogg, 1952: 135)

While Hogg takes an optimistic view of the role of the Asian delegates, it is difficult still to reconcile the strength of the Asian contingent of seventeen and the size of the delegations from Britain, North America, Continental Europe, South Africa and Australasia, which made up the balance of the attendees. The complete absence of an African delegate demonstrates the lack of appreciation given to any real understanding that the indigenous believer might have anything worthwhile to contribute. Certainly, mission tended to regard Asia with greater optimism than it did Africa. Walls contends that "The tendency to look eastward probably also reflected the balance of missionary effort; it had long been the practice to send the missionaries with superior academic or intellectual credentials to India or China, leaving the ecclesiastical cannon fodder for Africa" (Walls, 2002: 117).

As has been stated, Koyama discerns an Augustinian tone to the title and general orientation of the Report of Commission I. Walls refers to the view of the Conference that the world was divided into the "missionized" and the "not yet missionized" areas (ibid.). "The fully missionized areas were, for practical purposes, Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand (Latin America was passed over in silence to avoid splitting the Conference on the issue of whether Latin America was really Christian). The rest of the world, including the whole of Africa (save for a small section of South Africa), was deemed not yet fully missionized" (ibid.). Newbigin, asserting that Augustinian theology "painted a picture of the relationship between church and world that was to shape the thought and practice of Western Christendom for a thousand years" (Newbigin, 1986: 102), places Augustine's vision of the City of God in the framework of 'love-paternalism' For Newbigin, Augustine's philosophy of the role of the world is essentially a utilitarian one. It serves the purpose of the Church. "There are no illusions about the reality of sin that always threatens this order. But the greater reality is the sovereign Creator and Judge, who will at the end separate forever the just from the unjust, and justice will be equal, whether for peasant or pope" (ibid.). In the sense in which Newbigin interprets an Augustinian view of a two-world situation, the very title of Commission I would certainly seem to serve as an initial slogan that lends itself to such an understanding. In terms of a type of Kingdom christology, a clear dichotomy is established at the very beginning of the Report, where "There may have been times when in certain non-Christian lands the missionary forces of Christianity stood face to face with as pressing opportunities as those now presented in the same fields, but never before has there been such a conjunction of crises and of opening doors in all parts of the world as that which characterises the present decade" (WMC I, 1910: 1). In contrast, on the home front "It is likewise true that never on the home field have the conditions been more favourable for waging a campaign of evangelisation adequate in scope, in thoroughness, and in power" (ibid.).

In the opening pages of the Report, the authors portray a vision of the non-Christian world that is almost eschatological in that it is reminiscent of Romans 8, where the world is awaiting the disclosure of and manifestation of the 'sons of God'. Just as Paul contrasts the affliction of the past and the present with the glory which is to come, a glory so great that "the whole created world is looking eagerly forward to the disclosure of the sons of God", so for Commission I, "the Christian Church has at the present time a wonderful

opportunity to carry the Gospel simultaneously to all the non-Christian world, and they are also profoundly impressed by the urgency of the present situation" (ibid: 5). In an expression of the Augustinian alliance between the secular and the sacred, we are told that "one of the most significant and hopeful facts is that the vast majority of the people of the non-Christian nations and races are under the sway, either of Christian governments or of those not antagonistic to Christian missions. This should greatly facilitate the carrying out of a comprehensive campaign to make Christ known" (ibid: 6).

We see in the opening pages a clear christological imprint, the character of which is very much stamped with the imagery of Romans. In Romans 5, Paul continually contrasts Adam and Christ . This Adamic christology interprets one in the light of the other. As C. K. Barrett expresses it, "The chapter continues with a running comparison and contrast between Adam and Christ: by his transgression, Adam brought upon the race sin, condemnation, and death; Christ brought grace, justification, and life" (Barrett, 1962: 69). Another theme of Romans 5 is that "neither Adam nor Christ acted as an individual" (ibid: 72). This Adam/Christ interplay is, according to F. F. Bruce, "a prominent feature of Paul's Christology" (Bruce, 1966: 125). In Romans 8, the rebellion of Adam, which led "on the one hand, to a distortion of the make-up of human nature, and, on the other, to the subjugation of mankind, and of the cosmos itself, to powers which should have been the servants of man", has been defeated in Christ (Barrett, 1962: 115). "The victory of Christ becomes complete at his *parousia*, and this consummation is eagerly awaited not only by men but also by the lower creation" (ibid: 117). However, "Something of the glory is already visible: Paul elsewhere sees a special splendour in the church as the fellowship of the reconciled, and thinks of it as being displayed, even at this present time to celestial beings as God's masterpiece of reconciliation" (Bruce, 1966: 168). If neither Adam nor Christ acts as an individual in Paul's christology, so in the Report, the non-Christian and the Christian worlds are represented in "non-Christian races and nations" (WMC I, 1910: 6) and the Church respectively.

The non-Christian world, then, as the lower creation of Romans 8, is beginning to recognise the glorious role of the Church as never before. So, "The minds of the people in most countries are more open and favourable to the wise and friendly approach of Christian missionaries than at any time in the past"(ibid.). In Japan, "there is almost everywhere a readiness to hear and to consider the Gospel message" (ibid.). In Russia,

"The leaders of the nation and other thoughtful men are feeling the need of a new moral basis, and many of them are looking to Christianity to furnish it" (ibid.). We are told that "Almost the whole population of Korea is now ready to listen to the Gospel" (ibid.) and "In no part of Manchuria is there open hostility to the Gospel ... A missionary writing from a province in China, says that he could not ask for greater friendliness than that which he now meets from all classes of the people" (ibid: 7).

The authors make constant use of the term 'Kingdom' in relation to the spread of the Gospel. If certain nations are not now taken for Christ, "these nations are sure to become increasingly antagonistic and hostile to pure religion and to constitute the most serious obstacles to the spread of the Kingdom of Christ" (ibid: 28). In India, "There have been large in-gatherings into the Kingdom of Christ" (ibid: 38). This Kingdom christology, in which Christ is seen as ruler over an area, or in which the Church is seen as the proxy instrument of expansion and occupation, demonstrates once again the sense of separation between the spiritual and the secular, the Christian and the non-Christian, the 'missionised' and the 'non-missionised'. Stanley points out that "The missionary movement was born out of a conviction that the church stood on the brink of the last days of history. Christians expected that the work of foreign missions would initiate a turning of the 'heathen' to Christ on such a scale that the kingdoms of this world would become in actuality the kingdom of Christ" (Stanley, 1992: 74). The rise and influence of postmillennialism, while its commitment to personal salvation might have waned, still looked to a societal evolution in the light of kingdom principles. "The expectation of social transformation was no longer tied so explicitly to the process of personal conversion, and began to be understood more loosely in terms of the spread of Christian civilisation and idealism" (ibid: 75), although without the "cutting edge of Puritan theology" these ideals "degenerated all too easily into a facile creed of liberal imperialism" (ibid: 76).

The home Church is tasked with the responsibility of expanding its missionary operation. The Report emphasises "The apologetic value and influence of a widespread, thorough, and triumphant propagation of the Gospel" (ibid: 46). "World evangelisation is essential to Christian conquest at home. The only faith which will conquer Europe and America is the faith heroic and vigorous enough to subdue the peoples of the non-Christian world"

(ibid: 47). The corrupting influences of Western civilisation are warned against as "influences antagonistic to the extension of Christ's Kingdom" (ibid: 22).

Mott's biographer points out that, in choosing the members of Commission I, "In spite of Mott's own preferences, no 'strong native leaders', as stipulated by the international planning committee were included" (Hopkins, 1979: 348). Such an omission is strongly underlined by the language in the latter section of the Report, which is entitled *The Church in the Mission Field as an Evangelistic Agency*. The Report states "Among the primitive races, the white man, when he has been able to settle peacefully in their midst, wields enormous influence. He comes to them as the representative of the higher knowledge, the superior forces, the marvellous apparatus of the outer world which is breaking in upon their lower level" (WMC I, 1910: 319). The Report does warn against "social aloofness and superiority", which "is inimical to the realisation of Christian brotherhood between him and his fellow-Christians in the native Church" (ibid: 321). However, the Report warns against a policy which "has been largely followed of obliterating as far as possible all distinctions between the foreigner and the native" (ibid.). It refers to the failure of many gifted missionaries to achieve the removal of such distinctions in any meaningful and successful way: "On this point, there is a remarkable consensus of testimony from the various fields" (ibid.). While the advantageous nature of the native Church is highlighted: the ability of the native to speak the language and mind of the non-Christian people and his or her ability to communicate "to the non-Christian people what the Gospel will do for them individually and socially" (ibid: 323–4), it is clear from the Report that the native Churches are "inadequate" for the evangelistic task (ibid: 340).

The Report contains near the end a section on 'The Superhuman factor in carrying the Gospel to all of the non-Christian world', that is, the ability of God to compensate for human inadequacy. If there is an Augustinian hue to the document, it is balanced somewhat by a counter-tendency towards a more accommodating stance with regards to the non-Christian faiths at this point. "Unquestionably God has been working in the world through the centuries before the coming of Christ. 'My Father worketh hitherto and I work.' He has been working through the non-Christian religions, not alone in using such truth as they may possess for the betterment of men, but also in making these religions a schoolmaster to lead the peoples to recognise in due time their need of Christ" (ibid: 352). With this nod towards the possibility of "such truth as they may

possess" in non-Christian faiths, the focus is then very much set on a christo-centric and exclusivist response to the need of the non-Christian world (ibid: 353).

An overwhelming sense of the darkness of the non-Christian world and the need it has for Christ permeates the Report. No real attempt is made to assess any positive contributions of the non-Christian faiths except as inadequate manifestations of a deeper need which can only be satisfied in Christianity. Attempts by Buddhism in Japan, Burma and Ceylon to reform itself and provide better training for its priests is noted, but its efforts are regarded in the Report as "seeking not only to defend itself but also to take the offensive or aggressive attitude" (ibid: 14). It is noted with alarm that "The Japanese Buddhists have organised a missionary society" (ibid.). Such attempts by Buddhism are to be met with aggressive practices on the part of the Church: "To meet this revival of the ancient religion it is necessary that we place Christianity more effectively before the people" (ibid: 15).

In his discussion of the importance of Romans 1 as a scriptural foundation for the missionary movement, Andrew Walls notes that the argument of 1:18f "about the universality of God's wrath, and this section especially refers specifically to the pagan world (1:18–32) has not unnaturally had a history of its own in missionary thought" (Walls, 1996: 56). He goes on to write that "The Christian view of non-Christian religions reflects traditions of thought which have come to be denominated respectively those of 'continuity' and 'discontinuity', the one stressing God's activity in the world outside the sphere of Scripture or church ... the other stressing the radical difference between God's redeeming actions in saving history and any system whatever of human thought or life" (ibid.).

Taken as a whole, then, Commission I does present an exclusivist approach in christological terms. The first of the commissions sets the scene by positing a world of two halves. The Kingdom imagery is quite important. The 'Kingdom of Christ' is set over and against the "non-Christian world". There is a strong cultural dichotomy at work here. Even where the culture of the native churches is valued, the native evangelist is still the mediator of a hegemonistic and ultimately Western-based message. The Report is keen to show that the native evangelist can understand the mind of the people and the "whole mental world in which the native dwells, and from which he looks out on new

claimants for belief and obedience" (WMC I, 1910: 323) but "It is the triumph of Christianity which is at stake, and foreign forces must rally to the fight on fields where otherwise the native churches would be left to an unequal combat against the common foe" (ibid: 342). The commission finds that "It is the high duty of the Church promptly to discharge its responsibility in regard to all the non-Christian world" (ibid: 363). With regards to Islam, the Report states that "its unwillingness to acknowledge the supreme Lordship of Christ, will yield to the Gospel if Christians do their duty" (ibid: 367). The cultural values of the non-Christian and Christian worlds are contrasted. The political and spiritual spheres of the Christian world are united and allied together in a mutual, cultural alliance. As we have seen above, "the vast majority of the people of the non-Christian nations and races are under the sway, either of Christian governments or of those not antagonistic to Christian mission. This should greatly facilitate the carrying out of a comprehensive campaign to make Christ known" (ibid: 6). Elsewhere the Report states, "Everything vital to the success of the movement to carry the Gospel to all the non-Christian world depends upon the power of God Himself. In His hands is the Government of the world. He has entrusted enormous powers to Christian nations. His providence has opened the approach to the non-Christian countries, determined the order of their occupation and developed agencies and influences which facilitate the spread of Christianity" (ibid: 352).

Commission I certainly does not seek to define either the Gospel itself or the Jesus Christ it preaches. Rather, it would appear to offer a consensualised Christ who is contextualised in a Western Christian setting. The Christ of Commission I is less a figure and more of a figurehead; his role is to 'front' a missiological strategy. Throughout the volume, there is much more a sense of cultural transformation than of spiritual development. Christ is mentioned over and over again, but almost always in the context of passive observer of the mission of the Church. It is as if the Church is about its business and Christ becomes the great legitimiser of its mission. This Christ is outside the cultures to which the Gospel is being preached and is brought into them by the missionary endeavour. Although "He has preceded the messengers of the Gospel and prepared people to understand it and to be responsive to it" (ibid), the civilising power of Christian culture is still needed:

Unless the principles and spirit of Christ do shape a new civilisation it is sure to become materialistic and rationalistic. More than this, these nations are sure to become increasingly antagonistic and hostile to pure religion and to constitute the most serious obstacles to the spread of the Kingdom of Christ ... Now is the time to impress upon their officials and other thinking men that it is only righteousness and integrity of Character that can make a nation permanently great, and that these are direct products of the Christian Gospel. No policy could be more disastrous than for the Christian Church to allow any people to become civilised without bringing the superhuman Gospel to bear upon them in their transition state ... Some of these nations, like China, are weak now, notwithstanding the fact that they possess the elements necessary to give them a place among the strongest of nations. Their strength will soon be organised. It is all-important that Christianity be deeply rooted in these lands before that day comes. (ibid: 28, 29)

Again we see here the alliance of convenience between the cultural and the spiritual. The quotation begins with an appeal for the "principles and spirit of Christ", but quickly slips into an imperialist mindset and set of strategies, with 'Christ' being replaced with, or made synonymous with, "the Christian Church" and "Christianity".

In terms of Reinhold Niebuhr's work on the relationship between Christ and culture, it is instructive to see where the christology of Commission I would fit in Niebuhr's typology. In *Christ and Culture* (1951), Niebuhr sets out a number of different christological approaches to culture. In the first, 'Christ-against-culture', Niebuhr draws upon the thought of the North African theologian, Tertullian. "He has no sympathy with the efforts of some Christians of his time to point out positive connections between their faith and the ideas of the Greek philosophers" (Niebuhr, 1951: 54). So, writes Niebuhr, "The great North African theologian seems, then, to present the epitome of the 'Christ-against-culture' position ... he remains one of the foremost illustrations of the anticultural movement to be found in the history of the church" (ibid: 55). Recognising that the 'Christ-against-culture' is far from being a simplistic phenomenon, Niebuhr goes on to analyse it in detail, a task which is outside the scope of this chapter, but Niebuhr does write "The knottiest theological problem raised by the Christ-against-culture movement is the problem of the relation of Jesus Christ to the Creator of nature and Governor of history as well as to the Spirit immanent in creation and in the Christian community" (ibid: 80, 81). He continues, "Practically the problem arises for radical Christians when, in their concentration on the Lordship of Christ, they seek to defend his authority, to define the content of his commandment, and to relate his law or reign to that power which governs nature and presides over the destinies of men in their secular

societies ... Their rejection of culture is easily combined with a suspicion of nature and nature's God; their reliance on Christ is often converted into a reliance on the Spirit immanent in him and the believer; ultimately they are tempted to divide the world into the material realm governed by a principle opposed to Christ and a spiritual realm guided by the spiritual God" (ibid: 81). These exclusivist or radical Christians are "living in an interim" (ibid: 73). "Whether exclusive Christians are eschatologists or spiritualists, in either case they must take account of the 'meanwhile', the interval between the dawning of a new order of life and its victory, the period in which the temporal and material has not yet been transformed into the spiritual" (ibid.). Certainly, the two-world view of Commission I would appear to fit in with this interpretation of the outworking of exclusivist or 'radical' Christianity. The commission's view of the non-Christian world reaching to the Christian for its answers indicate that interim state where it is striving to achieve a spiritual satisfaction not yet available to it.

However, Commission I also strongly indicates the intention of the Church to engage with the world. Albeit, this is on its own terms and in pursuit of its own objectives, but it does still set out to immerse the Church in the midst of the societies to which it believes it is called to preach its message. So, in its section 'The Relation of the Various Missionary Methods to Carrying the Gospel to All the Non-Christian World' it sets out its plans for the furtherance of its aims through literature campaigns, education, medical missions and industrial and agricultural training (although these latter are not universally supported in the Report).[13] In this sense, Christian mission could be said to be concerned with what Niebuhr calls "Christ, the transformer of culture" (Niebuhr, 1951: 190). Niebuhr says that those who hold this approach, also termed 'conversionism', "hold fast to the radical distinction between God's work in Christ and man's work in culture", but "do not take the road of exclusive Christianity into isolation from civilisation" (ibid.). While Commission I is largely negative towards non-Christian culture, its view that it is expressing its desire to attain to Christianity could be understood as displaying what Niebuhr calls "a more positive and hopeful attitude towards culture" (ibid: 191). The christology of the conversionists, according to Niebuhr, causes them to "refer to the Redeemer more than to the giver of a new law, and to the God whom men encounter

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13. See pp. 308–9 of the Commission I Report, where inefficient uses of industrial and agricultural training are "a grave example of unsuitability of method and waste of funds" whose use to evangelisation is "questioned".

more than to the representative of the best spiritual resources in humanity. They understand that his work is concerned not with the specious, external aspects of human behaviour in the first place, but that he tries the hearts and judges the subconscious life; that he deals with what is deepest and most fundamental in man" (ibid: 190, 191). Niebuhr employs Augustine as an example both of the radical school, or the exclusivist school, because of his interest in monasticism and his "antithesis of heavenly and earthly cities" (ibid: 207), and as "a theologian of cultural transformation by Christ" (ibid: 208). "Christ is the transformer of culture for Augustine in the sense that he redirects, reinvigorates and regenerates that life of man, expressed in all human works, which in present actuality is the perverted and corrupted exercise of a fundamentally good nature" (ibid: 209).

Although Commission I does attempt to engage with non-Christian culture, it does so, I believe, from the position of cultural supremacy and, as a result, is closer to Niebuhr's 'Christ-against-culture' model than his 'Christ-as-transformer-of-culture'. The commission's attitude towards non-Christian culture is not a positive one, so any attempt to change that culture is hegemonistic and supplantive, rather than transformative. The christology of Commission I is somewhat aggressive in its opposition to the non-Christian culture with which it seeks to engage. In fact, 'conflict' may be a better term than 'engage'. The Christ of Commission I is not the Christ of the *Logos*, a Christ we will discuss in more detail in the next two chapters. He is not a Christ who is emergent from within non-Christian cultures. He may have been at work within these cultures, but only as a kind of 'sleeper-agent' anticipating the arrival of a more perfect way. Christ is 'Christ the King'; there is in the Report a 'Kingdom christology', in which Christ's kingship is not only spiritual, but through the linkage of the spiritual and the political, is also monocultural.

As noted above, Koyama described Edinburgh 1910 itself as a 'missiological monologue with the Christian West" (Koyama, 2002: 2). I believe that this is seen most clearly in this Report of Commission I, where a one-sided view of the world is adopted. There is no attempt to engage with the non-Christian world in terms of a dialogue. One is the 'giver' and the other, the 'receiver'. Christ is on the outside looking in. He needs the vehicle of Western mission to take him into the non-Christian cultures. Koyama makes the observation that

> The concept of the Christian world is as unrealistic as that of the non-Christian world. The complexities and ambiguities of human existence do not allow such a self-serving distinction. The gospel moves freely into the unholy zone. This has created the ever changing and expanding relevancy of the gospel's message for the world. Transformation, *metamorphosis*, is fundamental to biblical theology. This motif has inspired a transition from a church-centred missiology to a world-centred missiology based on a theology of the Kingdom of God. To say that all humanity is condemned (*mass perditionis*, Augustine) and to base missionary obligation on this thesis disregards the presence of the grace of God in the so-called 'non-Christian world'. (ibid.)

Walls, in his discussion of Romans 1 and its relevance to the missionary message makes an important point concerning Romans 1:18ff: "Paul's concern here is not with systems at all, but with men. It is *people* who hold down the truth of unrighteousness, who do not honour God, who are given up to dishonourable passions. It is upon men, who commit ungodly and wicked deeds, that the wrath of God is revealed" (Walls, 1996: 66). Therefore, Walls claims, although Christianity as a system has often been identified with the righteousness of God, it has also been recognised by missionaries that "if principalities and powers work within human systems, they can and do work within this one. Man-in-Christianity lies under the wrath of God just as much, and for the same reasons, as Man-in-Hinduism. It was the realization of this which saved the earliest generations of the modern missionary movement from the worst sort of paternalism" (ibid.). Walls concludes that "The Christian preacher had the same message of *repentance* and faith for the non-Christian world as he had been preaching to the Christian world, for it was not Christianity that saves, but Christ" (ibid.).

Commission II: The Church in the Mission Field

Interestingly, in his brief treatment of the discussion of Commission II, Hedlund refers to its title as "The Church *On* the Mission Field" (emphasis added), rather than " ... *in* the Mission Field". David Kerr takes care to make the distinction between the two in a brief paper delivered to a conference in Edinburgh in 2003, which dealt with the work of this commission. Kerr makes the point that even though the commission title uses the preposition 'in', it nevertheless often lapses during the Report itself into using 'on', betraying, Kerr believes, a Western bias which viewed the Western Church as being in a position of power rather than partnership. Indeed, by the second page of the Report, the preposition 'on' is used in place of 'in'.

Kerr writes

Ambivalence as to which preposition was correct reminds us that the Report was researched, written and debated overwhelmingly by western Christians who would have seen themselves *on* the mission field, while the contributions from indigenous Christians *in* the mission field were minimal. Of the 218 correspondents whose letters fed into the preparation of the report, 16 were non-western Christians; none was included in the commission itself; and only 4 were reported as contributing to the plenary discussion. Add in the fact that only 20 women appear among the contributors to the report, and only 42 lay people (which included all the women) and we have to conclude that Commission Two's perspective on *The Church in the Mission Field* was exclusively protestant and overwhelmingly clerical and male. Is this really how the Holy Spirit works? (Kerr, 2003: 2)

Under the chairmanship of Rev. J. Campbell Gibson, a missionary himself in China with the China Mission of the Presbyterian Church of England, the commissioners of Commission II *The Church in the Mission Field* (WMC II) divided the Report into eight chapters, which dealt broadly with matters of church organisation and with training. The Report takes on a paternal tone from the beginning, with references to the younger churches in terms, such as "The child has, in many places, reached, and in others is fast reaching, maturity; and is now both fitted and willing, perhaps in a few cases too eager, to take upon itself its full burden of responsibility and service" (WMC II, 1910: 3). However, the commissioners also recognise that "the Church on which we report presents itself no longer as an inspiring but distant ideal, nor even as a tender plant or a young child, appealing to our compassion and nurturing care. We see it now an actual Church in being, strongly rooted, and fruitful in many lands" (ibid.). The commissioners stress "We have now to think of the Church on the mission field not as a by-product of mission work, but as itself by far the most efficient element in the Christian propaganda. The words of Christian people, spoken to their own countrymen in all lands, are the most efficient, as well as the most extensive, preaching of the Gospel, and their lives are everywhere the most conspicuous and conclusive evidence of its truth" (ibid: 2).

Again, as in Commission I, the Report makes the distinction between two worlds, although it qualifies this by stating, "The whole world is the mission field, and there is no Church that is not a Church in the mission field" (ibid: 4). We are then told that for the purposes of the Report "The Commission has perforce accepted the popular but inexact

usage of calling only those regions 'the mission field' where the Church has more recently planted, and where its history falls, roughly speaking, within the last two centuries" (ibid.). So, when the Commission interprets the "Church in the Mission Field" to which its title refers, we are told, "Perhaps the most obvious criterion by which we may recognise a Christian community as falling within the scope of our Report is neither chronological nor geographical. It may be found rather in two features which are common to every part of 'The Church in the Mission Field.' On the one hand it is surrounded by a non-Christian community whom it is its function to subdue for the Kingdom; and on the other, it is in close relationship with an older Christian community from which it first received the truth" (ibid: 5). Again, we see the idea of the Church "surrounded" by a community which the Church is "to subdue for the Kingdom".

One of the interesting features of the Report is the paucity of the use of the name of Christ, certainly in the first fifty pages or so, when the name is used less than a handful of times, in stark contrast to the terms "Church" or "Christian". With this in mind, it is interesting to see that Kerr points out that while the term Church carries with it the implication of universality, in reality the word referred only to the churches that were actually connected to the missionary societies involved in the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, and in particular, only those in the non-Christian world. These were protestant and largely either British or North American (Kerr, 2003: 2) The universal Christ is therefore reduced to the particular ecclesiastical expressions of Christianity meeting at Edinburgh and ministering throughout the non-Christian world.

There are encouraging signs, nevertheless, of the commission recognising that something of value might emerge from the younger churches, and the commission expresses this in terms which recognise the cultural contexts of the Christian communities. There is an acceptance that "there is some danger of overloading the young Church in the mission field by the over-multiplication of organisations of Western type" (WMC II, 1910: 270). Missionary societies are told that "Encouragement should also be given to native Christians of ability to write freely on subjects with which they are familiar, and in which they are likely to express truth in forms adapted to the thought of their own people (ibid: 274). This fits in with the spirit of Chapter Six of the Report, entitled 'Character and Spiritual Fruitfulness of Christian Life'. In this chapter, the Report takes up a theme touched upon in Commission I. "Even in pagan life, dark as it usually is, it must not be

denied that tokens of good exist, and when these appear among the members of a young Church, they cannot fairly be claimed as proofs of our success. On the other hand, there is in pagan life so much that is grossly evil, and that has eaten so deeply into the life of whole races of men, that freedom from it may be a real token of a new ethical life which is nothing less than miraculous even when still moving on a low plane" (ibid: 208). Mild and infrequent positive references to the faiths in the midst of which the missionaries are working, are counterbalanced by strong negative overtones.

The questioning in Western literature of missionary attempts to change dress, behaviour, idolatry and culture among non-Christian peoples is dismissed, especially the notion that "the Christian mission appears to the dilettante mind in the character of an iconoclast condemning to destruction interesting works of primitive art and emptying life of interesting adjuncts of myth, folklore and fairy tale" (ibid: 211). The commissioners admit "We do not doubt that idolatrous worship has in it a primitive element of significance as a recognition of the supernatural" (ibid.), a point which is then balanced with "But to the western mind, it is hardly conceivable how universally life and thought in the pagan world have been darkened by terrors which give idolatry its hold over men" (ibid.). Similar opinions are expressed throughout the chapter, with Christianity credited with ensuring "that the human soul is set free from haunting fear, and is able to listen to the voice of the Gospel. But since idolatry holds its votaries not by love, but by their fears, dissipation of fear destroys at once the power of idolatry" (ibid: 213).

Teresa Okure, a Nigerian commentator on Commission II, has remarked on the differences in the Report between the more positive attitude shown to Asian cultures and attitudes to other cultures regarded as non-Christian (Okure, 2003: 7). Allied to this view is her assessment of the attitude of the Report towards the continent of Africa itself. She observes, "The image of Africa projected in the Report is consistently negative. Though perceptively described as 'one of the widest and most varied of all the mission fields of the world', the Report consistently speaks of Africa as if it were just one country" (ibid: 10). Okure notes, "The Report speaks of China, Japan, Korea, India (all countries) and Africa, as if Africa was just a country among countries. This reduction of Africa to one country applies not only in the body of the Report, but in the list of correspondents. They come from Japan and Korea (15), China (64), India (70), Africa (35)" (ibid.). Certainly the Report does contrast Asian civilisations to those civilisations with Black

populations. Fiji and New Guinea are portrayed as barbarous and savage, whilst Japan is praised for its "ancient civilisation" (WMC II, 1910: 6, 7). The Report further says that amongst those the missionary may meet there are "those who are naturally intelligent and those who are naturally dull, members of civilised and advanced races, and those of communities only emerging from barbarism" (ibid: 58).

Okure presents a question about the European Christian attitude, a question which very much ties in with the discussion above regarding the separation of the person of Christ from the system of Christianity, and indeed Christianisation, discernable in both commissions I and II. She asks, "Was Europe devoid of its own barbarism even at the time? The question is asked, not pejoratively, but in all good faith. The issue is whether Europe was ever evangelised? Or whether what it received was a Christianity that had already been subsumed into the Empire under Constantine (312–333), and subsequently made a state religion by Emperor Theodosius ... There is a big difference between the religion of Jesus and that of the empire. Christianity of the post-Constantinian era has become a religion of the empire, the subtle and abiding effects of which are yet to be recognised and addressed with Christological truth" (Okure, 2003: 11). She goes on to assert "the question as to whether or to what extent Europe was evangelised remains Christologically pertinent" (ibid: 12).

This christological question is very much at the forefront of any attempt to assess both commissions I and II, not because of the content of the question above, but because of the dichotomy between Church and Christ to which the question gives rise. The Conference's own implicit christology in both of these commissions is exclusive, not only in terms of its soteriological import, but in the sense that it does not leave space for the emergence of christology from within the mission contexts. In 'filling the space' with its own christological concerns and assumptions, it does not give any 'breathing space', as it were, to alternative emergent theologies. One model seems to fit all, even where that model may be slightly modified to fit different situations. In the specifically Indian context, Sebastian Kim has explored the implications of conversion on the sub-continent, whether those conversions emphasised *discontinuity* or *continuity* (Kim, 2003: 2, 3). According to Kim, "It is argued that Hindus see conversion in sociological and political terms while Christians view it in theological terms" (ibid: 5). However, writes Kim, "Christian theologians and missionaries ... have been concerned mainly with

methodological problems of Christian conversion; yet they share a common assumption with the historians who relate the problem of conversion to a particular aspect of Indian society – communalism, economics, politics or cultural diversity. That is, Christian studies also tend to assume that the problem of conversion is socio-cultural rather than theological. In other words, people of other faiths reject Christianity not because of its content but because of the way it is presented" (ibid.). Kim argues, "though Hindu objections to conversion are conditioned by socio-cultural and political circumstances, their arguments are deeply rooted in their own philosophy and religious traditions" (ibid: 12).

In a section dealing with 'Debates and Conversion under the British Raj', Kim cites the view of Kenneth Jones that three Hindu views on the relationship between Hinduism and Christianity can be identified in the early nineteenth century: "the equivalence of Christianity and Hinduism, based on the 'ethical core of each religion'; the validity of both Hinduism and Christianity, with each having different paths; and the supremacy of Hinduism over Christianity" (ibid: 13). In dealing first of all with the example of Ram Mohan Roy, Kim argues that Roy, while attracted to the teachings of Jesus, "saw the Christian doctrines built around them as a corruption of the religion of Jesus" (ibid: 15). He could not accept the doctrine of the atonement, but rather viewed the following of Jesus in terms of obedience to his teaching as "compatible with Hinduism" (ibid.). The neglect of adherence to either the deity or atonement of Jesus was viewed with alarm by the Serampore Baptist missionaries, leading to Roy being described by Joshua Marshman in a journal published by that mission, as "an intelligent heathen" (ibid: 16) but one who in treating Jesus as a teacher rather than a redeemer could cause serious damage to the Christian truth (ibid.). In response, Roy "stressed the sufficiency of the teaching of Jesus apart from dogmas and historical facts" (ibid.). At the end of the prolonged debate with Marshman, "Roy became increasingly hostile to the missionaries, and turned instead to defend Hinduism" (ibid: 17). "The debate", concludes Kim, "has been seen first and foremost as a failure of missionary response towards an Indian attempt to interpret Christianity" (ibid.). In his assessment of the issue, Kim mentions the view of Stephen Neill, who wrote: "The plain fact of the matter is that the men of Serampore were strategically right but tactically wrong. Rammohun Roy was mistaken in thinking that the precepts of Jesus can be separated from everything else in the Gospels; he was offering a moral code and not a gospel of redemption. But most readers will sympathise with the

regret expressed by Manilal Parekh, that this sincere attempt by a Hindu to understand Jesus did not meet with a warmer welcome from those who claimed to be the representatives of Christianity" (Neill, 1985: 368).

Something similar could be said, perhaps, of commissions I and II, in the inverse. They appear to have extricated Christ from Christianity in their presentation of the Christian message, making the missionary message more a moral code and a system of belief, and less a matter of relationship with a transforming person. Kim understands M. M. Thomas as viewing the controversy as having at its centre the issue of conversion. Thomas also interprets Marshman's approach to the debate with Roy as originating in his identification of "faith-response to Christ with a set of rigid doctrines" (Thomas, 1969: 30). The controversy, according to Thomas, "may be seen in part as the struggle of modern India to define the truth and meaning of Jesus Christ in terms relevant to its life and thought, and in part as the Church's witness to its faith in dialogue with a segment of the Indian mind" (ibid: 29). J. N. Farquhar recognises Roy's commitment to the person of Jesus as distinct from the system "Ram Mohan Roy recognized clearly that Christ had a great contribution to make to Indian religion. He believed that the ancient Vedanta was all that India needed in the way of theology; but in the matter of ethics he saw the supremacy of Jesus; and in *The Precepts of Jesus*, he laid the ethical teaching of Christ before his fellow-countrymen, and told then plainly that they required to study it and live by it" (Farquhar, 1967: 58, 59).

The missionary imperative which is to be found in both commissions I and II is founded on strategy and principles of conversion. In summing up his assessment on the debate between Marshman and Roy, Kim observes that its significance lay "in the theological problem of the difference between a Hindu who *discovered* his version of the truth in the teaching of Jesus and a Christian who was *converted* to his version of truth through his faith in the doctrines concerning the life and death of Jesus ... The historical and theological nature of the person of Jesus and the metaphysical doctrines about him were not his [Roy's] concern; he was taken up with following Jesus and applying his teaching to his life. This did not require a radical change from the past, since it was simply a further stage in the search for the truth, which his Hindu faith had taught him was ongoing" (Kim, 2003: 18).

Both commissions stress the discontinuity of Christianity with non-Christian faiths, rather than continuity, although some credit is given to non-Christian faiths for the elements of truth they possess. The 'Rethinking Christianity in India Group' were led to argue, in the person of Chakkarai in 1938, that "In the many debates going on now, the Church, its place and function in Christianity, have come to the forefront ... Besides, we cannot help thinking that in the history of Western Christianity, concentration on the church idea is in proportion to the lack of real faith in the Lord" (Devasahayam and Sudarisanam, 1938: 106). Chakkarai concludes:

> The idea of the Church, not yet brought to focus in the Christian mind, because it is not yet of any practical value, is a large one. But it is equally patent to us that the Lord of the Kingdom of God is larger, infinitely larger. The Indian soul is threading its way in the mazes of this labyrinth. The light is arising in the darkness, and we follow its gleam. The will-o'-the-wisp of the church to follow which we are invited by many in the West, has lured the Western churches to the very verge of the precipice and beyond. In the depth below, we see human ambitions and policies and the commandments of men, ruling in the name of the Lord. We can find no glory in the struggles of the churches ... It is our earnest hope that the Indian mind should not be compelled to listen to such debates, leaving aside the weightier matters. This is the sum and substance of our argument. (ibid: 123)

Commissions III, V, VII and VIII

As I will be dealing with Commission IV separately, I will in this section give an overview of the four other commissions, with greater attention being given to Commission III and then a brief treatment of the remainder, with the most salient points being discussed.

Commission III (WMC III) sat under the chairmanship of Dr Charles Gore, the Bishop of Birmingham. David Kerr's assessment of Commission III is largely positive, in that he believes it stresses the 'fulfilment' purpose of Christianity with regards to other faiths. The spread of the Gospel and the philosophy of evangelism in Commission III, is, Kerr maintains "Consistent with the other Commissions of Edinburgh 1910" in that it was "broadly understood in terms of 'fulfilment' " (Kerr, 2004: 2). Kerr points the reader to one area of the Report from which he quotes. This section deals with the attitude of Christianity towards other faith systems within the fulfilment model, "With due recognition of the many elements of truth and value in the non-Christian systems of religion and ethics, we should nevertheless be faithless – not alone to our religion, but to

the facts of experience – if we did not at this time reaffirm our conviction that the education of the world demands for its highest and best development those elements of truth which are the peculiar contribution of Christianity to the world's thought and life" (ibid; and WMC III, 1910: 368–9).

It is worth mentioning at this point the inevitable tensions which emerge from each of the commissions. Although Kerr discerns a reasonably united approach towards the idea of fulfilment in the Conference as a whole, it is still important to see that each of the commissions seem to give either greater or lesser emphasis towards the overall approach to non-Christian faiths, depending on factors such as the content of the commission focus, and the makeup of the commission itself. Visser 't Hooft writes,

> So the Edinburgh Conference gave a clear witness to the world-embracing nature of the Christian faith. Nevertheless it did not give a complete witness concerning the nature of Christian universalism. For the resolution about the continuation of the conference said specifically that this continuation was to follow the lines of the conference itself 'which are interdenominational and do not involve the idea of organic and ecclesiastical union'. Because of the resistance in many missionary circles against any relationship that might lead to a unity in doctrine, this restriction was at the time inevitable. But by thus preventing all discussion on matters of faith and order, the International Missionary Council (which grew out of the Edinburgh conference) could not give a clear interpretation of the nature of Christian universalism which includes, as we have seen, the witness to the unity of the people of God ... In the official documents no explicit statement concerning the Christocentric character of Christian universalism was made ... it meant that the Council could not present a coherent conception of the nature of a specifically Christian universalism.

> As the years went by, the themes which had been at first considered too dangerous, began to knock on the doors of the IMC. At the Tambaram meeting of 1938, with its strong emphasis on the Church, the issues of unity and the theological issues in general took a very prominent place. (Visser 't Hooft, 1963: 103, 104)

Visser 't Hooft is writing in the context of promoting a Christocentric universalism over and against religious syncretism, in his book *No Other Name* (1963), but his point is well made that for either side of the attitudinal divide with regards to non-Christian religions, Edinburgh 1910 did not satisfy in terms of formulating a satisfactory christological approach for the time. It left more questions than answers. That such answers are indeed christological in nature is underlined by Paul Knitter in his own *No Other Name?* (1985).

Knitter, in his discussion of the mainline Protestant model of salvation, which he both compares and contrasts with the conservative evangelical model, emphasises both approaches: "The contention that other religions cannot really mediate a truly saving encounter with God rests upon the Reformational insight into salvation 'by faith alone,' which in turn rests on the more fundamental belief in salvation 'by Christ alone.' The final mainline Protestant verdict on the religions is rooted, as was the case with Barth and the Evangelicals, in christology" (Knitter, 1985: 104). Brad Stetson makes a similar observation in his critique of the pluralist position, "*Contra* pluralist assumptions, Christian exclusivism derives its soteriological exclusiveness not from hauteur, ill-will, or resentfulness, but from faith in an conviction about the radically unique *incarnation and resurrection of Christ*, which, in the eyes of the believer, marks Jesus Christ as the distinctive response to the human condition" (Stetson, 1994: 125). Glyn Richards also stresses, "One of the significant issues relating to our examination of the responses to religious pluralism is the concept of uniqueness. We have seen that, as far as Christianity is concerned, it raises the question of the uniqueness of the revelation of God in Christ" (Richards, 1989: 149).

Commission III adopts a process of engagement with the faith systems in which its readership and audience operate, while continually maintaining the superiority of Christianity in every respect. The approach of this commission can be seen to owe a certain debt to Gore, in that it makes several references to Greek philosophy and to the 'Logos doctrine'. Chapter VII of Commission III deals with 'The Relating of Christian Truth to Indigenous Thought and Feeling', and it makes a number of points which have a direct bearing on the relationship between Christianity itself and the non-Christian faiths. It states, "When Christianity came into the world the very idea of a catholic or universal religion presented a great difficulty ... Christianity, however, appealed to the general heart of man lying below all national differences and proclaimed itself a religion for all men, based indeed on the special revelation made to the Jews, but proceeding from the common Father of all and addressed to the whole of the human family" (WMC III, 1910: 238, 239). Of Paul's preaching, we are told, "For instance, his speeches at Lystra and at Athens may be cited as instances of his seeking to base Christian truth on religious principles common to all men" (ibid: 239). Recognising that "the first apostolic teachers were guided to present this fundamentally Jewish religion in a way that best adapted it for catholic acceptance (ibid.), and that "even before the coming of Christ this

process had been at work in the synagogues of the Diaspora; and even at the centre of Judaism" (ibid.), the authors of the Report move on to write, "And the acceptance and development of the Logos doctrine, in substance by St. Paul and in name by St. John, made a broad high road towards the reconciliation of the Christian revelation with the best features in the current philosophies of the Empire" (ibid.).

The Report notes, with some concern, that "As time goes on evidences accumulate of conscious accommodation on the part of Church rulers to the popular religious customs of races which were just being won from paganism – customs connected with 'mysteries' or religious festivals, or with the relations of the living to the dead. It would be disputed how far this spirit of concession and accommodation was justifiable" (ibid: 240). This is very much in relation to the development of the early Church. The Report then goes on to claim that in its introduction into Europe, "there was very little conscious accommodation of the original doctrine on the part of the evangelists of Europe. The message was delivered to all and accepted by all as the same message of God" (ibid: 240, 241).[14] There did come about, though, "the diffusion of a catholic religion exhibiting local variations of custom and presentation ... while all the time the fundamental ideas and practices were identical" (ibid: 241). The Report then emphasises that "In all this period we notice hardly any risk of the Christianity in any district becoming exotic or representing a foreign influence" (ibid.). This, the Report puts down to "the fact that Christians and non-Christians in the early period shared a common elementary education" (ibid.).

The Report acknowledges, "Though the original home of Christianity is, as it were, the half-way house between East and West, the modern missionaries have represented strongly defined or intensely western forms of Christianity. There has been a gulf, very difficult to bridge, between the whole mental equipment of the modern – especially the Anglo-Saxon – missionary and the people of the East" (ibid: 245). So, while the Report lauds the success of the early Church, claiming that it "propagated itself in a society in which the different races were in process of fusion" (ibid.), it admits that "modern missions have been assisted by no such process of fusion. Christianity came to India as the religion of the foreign conquerors; and is still in the main so regarded ... The more

14. But, the Report admits, "there was somewhat later a conscious accommodation to such national religious customs as were thought to admit of a Christian interpretation and use" (WMC, 1910: 241).

recent zeal for western civilisation carries with it no prospect of social fusion" (ibid.). Conceding that "The wisdom of the first apostles has, on the whole, been singularly lacking", in a footnote to this, the Report, referring to a paragraph that deals primarily with the cultural presentation of Christianity and the fact that "converts have been introduced to controversies and confessions purely western in character and phraseology, and not necessarily belonging to the common Christian basis at all" (ibid.), points out "This most interesting topic cannot be pursued here; the theological presentation of Christianity does not fall within our purview in this enquiry" (ibid.). This is a somewhat ironic observation within the Report, since Gore himself was at the forefront of the Anglican move to exclude discussion of theological issues.

Curiously, although the Report makes much of the commonality, as it were, of the world of the early Church, a commonality which enabled the Church itself to find some common purpose of expression therein, and while deprecating the view that education is merely "the imparting of useful information" (ibid: 246), it then goes on to promote a view of education that it bases on *The Republic* of Plato, but which it then neutralises, or at least severely limits in terms of its usefulness as a tool of religious development. It moves from a discussion of the purpose of education as a foundation for religious progression into a discussion of educational methodology in which "The child is to be trained for social functions; its education is to be social; and it is to be a training of the child's whole being, body as much as mind" (ibid: 246, 247). It is possible that here the theological strictures on discussion have precluded any development of the ideas expressed hitherto – another instance of the moderating features of the parameters set. The emphasis on the whole child appears to be an admirable holistic aspiration, but in view of what has come before, it seems a failure of nerve.

The conclusions of Commission III are too numerous, and range too widely, to be dealt with here, but the Report, while identifying areas of failure, does say, certainly with regards to India, that "It is the missionaries who, sometimes almost alone, have striven to get within the barriers of the Indian spirit ... We believe that, though missionaries like other people have often failed to accomplish what they were aiming at, there is nothing more absurd than to speak of missions whether in the East or in Africa as failures" (ibid: 367). There is a strong emphasis in the conclusion on work in India and the observation is made that "The philosophical tendencies – critical, emancipatory, and individualistic in

their presuppositions and appeal – which were uppermost in British administrative thought in the middle of the nineteenth century had an especially marked influence upon Indian education" (ibid: 366). Interestingly, the conclusion devotes a section to 'The Importance of Seeking to Develop an Indigenous Christianity'. This section expresses an important recommendation and aspiration: "And we feel sure that a theology, which is really indigenous as well as truly and properly Christian and biblical must develop a native terminology, an end which is only likely to be attained where the vernacular is used for the expression of religious ideas" (ibid: 373).

Commission III, then, does contain a degree of self-reflection on the part of the missionary movement upon its endeavours. It admits to failures in its cultural relationships with various societies. Richard Fox Young comments, of Indians coming into contact with missionaries, "For the vast majority, it mattered little that missionaries came from different regions of the European world or that their social origin, education, and understanding of non-Western religions differed enormously. What mattered more was that, with very few exceptions, missionaries envisioned for India, always outlandishly and often outrageously, *the possibility of a new identity grounded in a different reality*" (Young, 2002: 38).[15] Referring to the anthropological work of Kenelm Burridge, Young claims that "Burridge would have us understand that missionaries evoke mixed responses because *they give themselves over to the critique and transformation of other people's business* by envisioning the possibility of a new identity grounded in another reality. Being a constant reminder that life can be different, they find themselves at odds with those whom they encounter: 'in the way' … By urging *metanoia*, they insinuate that traditional moralities are neither sacrosanct nor immutable" (ibid: 41). Frykenberg, on the other hand, urges caution in overestimating the colonial effect. For him, it can be "part of a technology for denigrating, shaming and shunning" (Frykenberg, 2003: 7).

Certainly, Commission III shows an awareness of some of the issues and contradictions involved in the colonial enterprise. Ogbu U. Kalu, in his discussion of the commission, highlights its full title, *Education in Relation to the Christianisation of National Life*, and asserts that "The very title of the Unit was theologically loaded as it proposed to examine how education could be used as an instrument to engage in mission to culture, baptizing the

15. In Brown and Frykenberg (eds), *Christians, Cultural Interactions and India's Religious Traditions* (2002).

nations or Christianising the national life" (Kalu, 2004: 14). Kalu identifies in Edinburgh 1910 at least three different approaches to the goal of education. The first, he argues, is assimilationist, where the indigenous culture is viewed as being in need of cultural uplift by the European model; the second, he identifies as an acknowledgement of the missionary process as 'cultural invasion', or as a civilising influence, and the third has to do with an indigenising process which in reality had its roots in the desire to ensure that in the face of nationalism and social and economic changes, Christianity had the means to embed and perpetuate itself (ibid: 16). Education in the Christian context, then, was primarily a tool of evangelisation. With reference to China, Gairdner comments, "To Christianise the national life of China! Would not that, more than any other one thing, mean the conquest of the world for Christ?" (Gairdner, 1910: 133). In his contribution following the discussion of the Report on 17 June 1910, the Hon. William Jennings Brian joined the debate: "these countries that are educating the world are Christian nations and by sending out these educators into all lands these Christian nations demonstrate that they are not afraid to lift other nations out of darkness and put them on the high road to prosperity" (WMC III, 1910: 434). Bosch writes of the perceived cultural superiority of Christianity: "Naturally this was not viewed as an imposition. 'It is certainly not by accident that it is the Christian nations that have become the bearers of culture and the leaders of world history', said Gustav Warneck. It was the gospel which had made the Western nations strong and great; it would do the same for other nations" (Bosch, 1991: 293). The commission's view of education is something akin to what Paul Tillich, in his chapter on the topic of the theology of education in *Theology of Culture* (1959), refers to as 'inducting'. The aim of induction "is not development of the potentialities of the individual, but induction into the actuality of a group ... town, nation, church" (Tillich, 1959: 147).

Graham Ward, appealing to Aquinas,[16] maintains that "the Christological question begins not with *who* is the Christ or *what* is the Christ; it begins with *where* is the Christ. The Christological enquiry therefore does not begin with the identity of the Christ, what in dogmatics is the nature as distinct from the work of Christ; it begins with an analysis of the operations whereby Christ is made known to us" (Ward, 2005: 1). Following Aquinas' conceptual model of christology, the emphasis is placed much more on soteriology than

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16. Ward quotes from Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, I.Q13.8: "God is not known to us in His nature, but is made known to us from His operations" (Ward, 2005: 1).

on personhood (ibid.). Accordingly, Ward claims, any christological enquiry must be a hermeneutical one, since we cannot have any immediate knowledge of God, only our interpretations of the way in which God might view any given thing or situation (ibid.). This hermeneutical enquiry has, therefore, to focus on "the nexus of relations in which the historical, social and cultural engage with the divine" (ibid.). Any statement we make about Christ is "a statement about ourselves and the times and cultures we inhabit" (ibid: 1, 2). As a result, "to do Christology is to inscribe Christ into the times and cultures we inhabit" (ibid: 2). In mapping the relationship between Christ and culture, Ward, building on Niebuhr's typology of models for that relationship, makes the observation "Christ is already a cultural event. We have no access to a Christ who has not already been encultured" (ibid: 21). Ward then suggests that one way to understand the relationship between Christ and culture is to say "If all things exist in Christ, then the cultural is not something entirely separate from him; the cultural is that through which God's redemptive grace operates. Christ, we could say, is the origin and consummation of culture in the same way as he is both the prototype and fulfilment of all that is properly human" (ibid: 22). The use of the word 'fulfilment' is interesting, because while Ward does not extend it to encompass any sense of 'fulfilment theology', the idea of Christ being the consummation and fulfilment is very much a missiological concept of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, about which there will be more discussion in the next chapter. For our purposes, I will use Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen's brief explanation, "It simply means that, since Christianity is considered to be the highest religion, other religions' search for truth and salvation can find fulfilment in Christ and Christian religion" (Kärkkäinen, 2003: 103).

There is much more a sense in Commission III of Christ as 'transformer of culture', to use Niebuhr's terminology. The conversionists, says Niebuhr, "hold fast to the radical distinction between God's work in Christ and man's work in culture" (Niebuhr, 1951: 190). As such, "they do not take the road of exclusive Christianity into isolation from civilisation, or reject its institutions with Tolstoyan bitterness" (ibid.). So, the authors of Commission III can claim with reference to aspects of Confucianism: "There can be no doubt that, as practically exhibited in common Chinese life, these noble ideas are debased and combined with much that Christians must view with abhorrence. But they are noble ideals, which afford a basis on which the Christian teaching about marriage and the family and the communion of saints can find a foundation. They are "the testimony of

the soul naturally Christian"; they are a true *preparatio evangelica*, such as early Christian teachers found in the philosophy of Greece" (WMC III, 1910: 251). There is a recognition of the need for Christ to be preached "in the form best suited to the Oriental spirit" (ibid: 245) and that "each local Church should from the first have the opportunity of developing a local character or colour" (ibid: 244). An appendix to the Report provides extracts from a pamphlet written by Dr Miller of Madras. This pamphlet was "circulated among delegates attending the Conference" (ibid: 441). Frykenberg describes William Miller of Madras Christian College as coming from among the "upper-class, intellectually eclectic, theologically liberal missionaries" in whose thought

> the downward filtration theory of Alexander Duff was replaced by the upward fulfilment paradigm as a way of explaining why Western missionaries had not seen more conversions among the high-caste elites of India. The Christian task was not so much to pray (and strive) for the conversion of people as to permeate Indian society with Christian values. To accomplish this, Christians were now seen as needing to influence those Hindu elites who were taking to Western education in droves. The biblical injunction of the Great Commission notwithstanding, conversion, as such, was no longer seen as such a worthy goal. (Frykenberg, 2003: 20)

Miller writes about "leavening or permeating" India with Christian thought (WMC III, 1910: 442):

> Thus Christian educationists have the right to hope that, few though the individuals may be whom their teaching leads to become openly members of the Church, yet the whole mass of Hindu society may in course of time become leavened with Christian thought and guided in daily life by Christian ideals. Perhaps it might be too much to say that a long and gradual process of leavening or permeating the general community is absolutely necessary before the national life of India, that is, the life of the real people of the country, is Christianised. It is certainly not too much to say that such a process is eminently desirable and sure to be eminently helpful. (ibid: 443, 444)

In christological terms, then, Commission III is concerned with a Christ who is both transformer and fulfiller. Any negative view of culture is modified and ameliorated by the idea that Christ is at work both in it, to a more limited degree, but very much in interaction with it to make it into something better, something purer. The fulfilment model portrayed in this Report is certainly stronger than that contained in commissions I and II, where culture is viewed in more negative terms. In Commission III, culture has some teleological function, it is moving towards a purpose. Christ has that soteriological

role of which Ward speaks when he interprets Aquinas. For Ward, "the engagement of Christ with culture and the enquiry into that engagement are inseparable. To do Christology is to engage in a Christological operation; to enquire is to engender Christ; to enter the engagement is to foster the economy whereby God is made known to us. To do Christology is to inscribe Christ into the times and cultures we inhabit" (Ward, 2005: 2).

Commission VII

In an interruption of the chronological order of the commission reports, I turn at this point to Commission VII (WMC VII), because many of the points made above are relevant to it. Entitled *Missions and Governments*, this relatively slim volume (compared to the other reports), contains just 186 pages, without index. Bosch deals with the issue of "manifest destiny." This originates not only "from the assumption of the superiority of Western culture over all other cultures, but also from the conviction that God, in his providence, had chosen the western nations because of their unique qualities, to be the standard-bearers of his cause even to the uttermost ends of the world. This conviction, commonly referred to as the notion of 'manifest destiny', was only barely identifiable during the early decades of the nineteenth century but gradually deepened and reached its most profound expression during the period 1880–1920" (Bosch, 1991: 298). "There is", Bosch goes on to say, "an organic link between Western colonial expansion and the notion of manifest destiny" (ibid.). Apart from the nationalistic genesis of "manifest destiny" (ibid.), the notion gave rise to an understanding among the white nations that in some way each of them shared in the calling to be the chosen people, a calling which appealed to the Old Testament concept of 'set-apartness' (ibid: 299). This, in turn, developed an eschatological hue, particularly in Anglo-Saxon Protestantism (ibid: 300). Bosch claims, "In this case the notion was at a profound level linked to millennial expectations; the Puritans believed that the Anglo-Saxon race was divinely mandated to guide history to its end and usher in the millennium" (ibid.) and a strong emphasis was placed on the divine providence which ordained that the Anglo-Saxon nations would play a major role in the end times. The period of high imperialism following 1870, and certainly after 1885, was the crucial era where "missions would be taken to the bosom of ecclesial protestantism" (ibid: 301).

The United States, in particular, prided itself on not pursuing colonialism and imperialism, opting instead, in the view of American Protestantism, for a spiritual imperialism, which stressed the dominion of Christ over the nations of the world (ibid.). The expansionist optimism of the Church was matched by a growth in missionary fervour: "From relatively small numbers before 1880, the American overseas missionary force increased to 2,716 in 1890, to 4,159 in 1900, to 7,219 in 1910, and to over 9,000 in 1915" (ibid.). It cannot be said, Bosch argues, that mission was either purely religious or purely nationalistic; rather, "the religious and national impulses were fundamentally not separable" (ibid: 302). Although Bosch tends to concentrate on the negative outcomes of the alliance between religious mission and colonial imperialism (cf Bosch, 1991: 291–8, 302–13), other commentators urge far more caution in their assessment of the relationship between Christianity and imperialism. Brian Stanley's treatment of the relationship traces the development of the anti-colonial reaction and analyses the view that "the Western missionary movement was the ideological expression of the total imperialist aggression of the West" (Stanley, 1992: 30). Stanley places the almost axiomatic identification of empire with exploitation under the microscope and he subordinates exploitative economic self-interest on the part of the British Empire to its commitment to humanitarian idealism and the Christian notion of empire as a "sacred trust" (ibid: 52). He highlights the economic benefits of empire for the colonies themselves, and opines that through Christianity and Western education, the "substitution of nationalist for traditional politics" meant that cultural imperialism actually helped to bring about the end of empire itself (ibid.).

In spite of its denominational and political divisions, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century evangelicalism did share, according to Stanley, "a cultural and ideological unity in which ideas and movements spread from one section to another with remarkable rapidity" (ibid: 57). Foremost among these trends was "the obligation to bring the gospel to the 'heathen' world" (ibid.). The Evangelical Revival "generated an absorbing passion for the spread of the gospel of the atoning death of Christ, a passion which found institutional embodiment in the welter of societies, both denominational and interdenominational, dedicated to domestic evangelism and foreign mission" (ibid: 59). The decline of rationalistic hyper-Calvinism ensured a greater emphasis on human agency in the spread of the Christian message (ibid.). The evangelical world-view was greatly influenced by the doctrine of divine providence, where God was regarded as both ordering and directing

human history towards the fulfilment of divine purpose (ibid: 68). Evangelical Christians saw a role for themselves in this unfolding of the plan of God for the whole world and a fundamental part of this process would be God's plan of salvation (ibid.). As a result, the ebb and flow of imperial expansion, along with its resultant randomness and irrationality in the light of changing political and contextual fortunes could all be rationalised as providential outworkings of the purposes of God (ibid: 69).

But, for a full understanding of the role of mission and its interaction with government, it is important to realise that, as Stanley phrases it, "The missionary movement was born out of a conviction that the church stood on the brink of the last days of history" (ibid: 74). In dealing with the 'powers' of this world, then, the missionary movement saw itself as a catalyst for an eschatological event. "Christians expected", writes Stanley, "that the work of foreign missions would initiate a turning of the 'heathen' to Christ on such a scale that the kingdoms of this world would become in actuality the kingdom of Christ" (ibid.).

Commission VI: The Home Base

Commission VI (WMC VI), the topic of which was *The Home Base of Missions*, asks at the very beginning of its report, "Has that Church sufficient vitality for the tremendous task to which it is called?" (WMC VI, 1910: 6). The key issue in the evangelisation of the world, the report insists from the outset, is "the depth and sincerity of the religious experience of the Church, the quality of its obedience, the intensity and daring of its faith" (ibid.). There is a great emphasis on the fostering of a spirit of prayer: "When the Church sets itself to pray with the same seriousness and strength of purpose that it has devoted to other forms of Christian effort, it will see the Kingdom of God come with power" (ibid: 16). Gairdner writes "If this be the task before the Church ... the evangelisation of all the world, the Christianising of the nations ... then what manner of men must they be who are sent to set their hands to it, and what manner of Church must it be that sends them?" (Gairdner, 1910: 215).

In the discussion of the report, the role of the missionary societies in galvanising the Church to greater efforts is a strong theme. One speaker presents the vision of "the Church of the living God arising among all the nations of the earth and arising as a great missionary society. This idea, of the Church itself as missionary society, – not Missionary

Societies within the Church, – I take for granted. Now I see how that idea will pervade all the life and operations of the Church. The Church a missionary society, all members of the Church called to be missionaries and to help in missionary work, and if all members, then first and foremost the clergy" (ibid: 297). The end result of this is envisaged in the following militaristic terms: "So a new life will come into the Church, and the Church will arise confronting this great opportunity as the army of God, living, united, militant, under the great Captain of our salvation, to enter that open door, and advance to the spiritual conquest of the world" (ibid: 298). Tissington Tatlow, the Secretary of the Student Christian Movement (SCM), made some perceptive remarks in which he offered a mild rebuke to those missionaries and Mission Board members who dissuaded their own children from entry into the mission field. He also noted "the amount of difficulty in matters of Christian belief" on the part of Christian students (ibid: 308). He continues, "the majority of those come with great difficulty to an assurance of belief, and one result of that is that at the time when men might and perhaps ought to be facing a missionary vocation, they are not ready to do so" (ibid.).

Tinyuko Sam Maluleke stresses the bipartisan attitude of Edinburgh and the role of the Church at home, "It was NOT a conference about the challenge of missions to the 'Church at home.' Indeed, it appears that mission was understood mainly in terms of foreign missions so that the 'Church at home' was only conceived of as 'the home base of missions' not a site of missions in its own right and in its own context" (Maluleke, 2006: 2). In discussing Commission I above, the point was made that the commissioners were heavily critical of the Church at home and its failings, but this criticism never extended to any consideration that the process of evangelism and Christianisation itself might be of benefit to the home Church. In fact, as noted, the view was sincerely held that by holding to the very primitive essentials of belief, the Church at home fulfilled the criteria for being regarded as a Christian Church in a Christian nation. There was no possibility of any questioning of the validity of adherence to faith on the part of the sending nation.

Institutional and personal Christianity were conflated in a way that was at odds with the true spirit of the holiness movement, which was in its ascendancy around the time of the Conference. The 1907 Keswick Convention had been attended by between 5,000 and 6,000 people, and numerous other similar conventions had sprung up in various centres

throughout Britain (Bebbington, 1989: 179). Admonitions towards upright and holy lives were commonplace in churches throughout the land, be they revivalist or not, but the national faith was not subjected to the same forensic tests that befell non-Christian systems, in which their negative aspects and the failings of their adherents could be combined to produce incontrovertible evidence of their inability to save or transform humanity. The assumptions with regards to the spiritual status of the home Church, were, of course, inextricable from the assumption of superiority of the revelation enjoyed by it. Its legitimacy rested not so much on the spiritual state of its members and the spiritual fruits of its endeavours, but rather in its inherent validity. The non-Christian world was very much 'the other'; the Christian world, while not faultless, nevertheless needed only to be 'fine tuned', as it were, to readjust its spiritual focus and increase the volume of its prayer. The Christian world shared a certain 'sameness' owing to its common cultural and spiritual inheritance, which was regarded as having made something like an indelible stamp upon it. So, indeed, Commission I could assert, as has been quoted above, "Happily the Home Church still possesses the essentials of primitive Christianity" (WMC I, 1910: 349). In his book, *Dancing on the Edge* (1997), Richard Holloway quotes the physicist, F. David Peat,

> All of us see the world through the spectacles of our world-views, through our particular ways of seeing and thinking about reality and society. Moreover, we hold these world-views in a largely unconscious way. We are not normally aware that we experience the world through their transforming or distorting, power. Since much of our world-view is culturally shared, we simply talk about 'the way the world is', or 'the very nature of reality'. (Holloway, 1997: 6).

The distinction between the Christian and non-Christian spheres presupposed a sameness and an otherness. It was largely unconscious because it was cultural. In their introduction to *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire* (2004), the editors, Keller, Nausner and Rivera – discussing the biblical injunction from Leviticus 19:33f, which deals with the topic of the 'alien' in the land and the necessity to "love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens" – point to the engagement of poststructuralists in critiquing that which is 'the same', a method which is also borrowed by the postcolonialists who wish to deconstruct the idea that the West has the prime authority and categorical superiority. They define this 'same' as "the dominant Western subject, as an imperial identity that is established by its violation of difference, that is, its appropriation or

annihilation of the other ... All poststructuralists point to the cultural power dynamics at work in this ontology that reduces otherness, alterity, difference to a unifying sameness" (Keller, Nausner and Rivera, 2004: 9).

The historical result of this was that, at the conversion of the Roman Empire, Christianity developed an "allergy to difference" (ibid.). In the same volume, R. S. Sugirtharajah claims that "There has always been a marked hesitancy to critically evaluate the impact of the empire among systematic theologians, both during and after the European expansion. Theologians in the West cannot excuse themselves by suggesting that the empire had little impact 'at home.' New studies in literature, visual culture, geography and history in the last decade have demonstrated the numerous ways in which the empire was central to English domestic life and popular consciousness" (Sugirtharajah, 2004: 22). Sugirtharajah refers to the view of Robert Beckford that "more books have been written by Western theologians about being nice to animals and the environment than about colonialism or race" (ibid.). In a discussion of some of the key works published on colonialism and mission in the British context, Sugirtharajah finds them deficient in any serious treatment of the topic, regarding both Max Warren and Reinhold Niebuhr's assessments of imperialism as promoting the idea the empire in itself was not immoral and that it was in fact "morally neutral, open to misuse, but with the right rulers a worthy enterprise" (ibid: 26). He also makes the point that, "In the name of theologising what we have here is old-fashioned imperial self-justification based on ignorance of the rich heritage of other peoples' traditions and an excessive optimism about what the West has done and can do for Asia, Africa and Latin America" (ibid.).

For our purposes of analysing the approaches of both commissions I and VI towards the perceived merits of the home base and the perceived needs of the 'other', Sugirtharajah, in a scathing comment on Stephen Neill's conclusion that God alone can judge what happened in Christian missions during the colonial period, writes, "What is ironic about this statement is that the people who passed indiscriminate judgements on other peoples' cultures, manners, and customs, are unusually silent when it comes to scrutinizing their own" (ibid: 27). Interestingly, given the amount of mostly positive attention given to the notion of fulfilment at Edinburgh, Sugirtharajah interprets fulfilment theory as simply another tool of imperialist control. In a discussion of the Indian Christian response to colonialism, he compares and contrasts the experiences of the subaltern class, "a class

largely rural, semi-literate, minimally if at all Westernised" (ibid.), whose relationship with imperialism he characterises as largely positive due to the benefits accrued, and the high-caste Westernised converts who viewed British rule "as an opportunity to reconfront their culture, reclaim it and reshape it to meet the demands of the time" (ibid: 29). The Indian theologians, Sugirtharajah insists, were reluctant to criticise colonial rule, being more interested in proving their patriotism and in formulating an approach to Christianity which presented it not as a foreign import or a foreign religion, but as being "continuous with Vedic tradition" (ibid: 30). In proving their patriotism, they tried to escape the criticism that linked them with Western excess or with the disdain some Westerners felt for Indian culture. "The way they went about this was to project Christianity not as an alien religion but as part of the Vedic tradition … Like Indiana Jones, they raided their own textual archives to demonstrate that those Vedic texts were already Christian or modernist, so that conversion to Christianity was not in any way an act of disloyalty to India" (ibid: 31). In assessing the contribution of M. M. Thomas, Sugirtharajah describes him as "Echoing Marx's double vision of the British in India, one destructive and the other regenerative" (ibid: 33), since he held that British rule had a providential purpose and had laid the foundations for good politics and social advancement. Thomas' desire to propose the Christian gospel and the kingdom as viable alternatives to a narrow nationalism is, for Sugirtharajah, "another form of colonialism – conquering Indians for Christ" (ibid.). Here again, the hegemony of the 'same' proves too strong for the 'other'.

In a 'postcolonial' reading of the Gospel of Mark, in the context of the Roman Empire, Stephen Moore makes some useful christological observations which can be applied to our discussion of the British Empire and the dichotomy between the home base and the non-Christian 'other'. Moore adopts a political reading of Mark, in which the casting out of the unclean spirit 'Legion' by Jesus, in Mark 5:1–9, is understood as a reference to Roman imperial forces (Moore, 2004: 134, 135). There is not space here to discuss Moore's entire argument, but, in Mark's presentation of Jesus as a figure who enjoins his disciples not to seek after glory or power and in his undermining of the power and authority of the primary disciples throughout the text, Moore interprets the gospel as having a strong anti-authoritarian theme. Mark's christology is not overtly that of an imperial Messiah, nor is Christ the punitive Messianic figure of the Book of Revelations. Mark, while anti-authoritarian, is careful not to predict or prophesy the destruction of

Rome, but rather tackles the local elites who take their power from Rome and misuse it. The empire itself is tolerated to a large degree and "is merely God's instrument, his scourge, which he employs to punish the indigenous Judean elites" (ibid: 142).

Commissions I and VI, while willing to critique aspects of the imperial world-view, nevertheless stop well short of any criticism of empire itself. Empire is the vehicle in which the gospel travels worldwide. The home base is not just the seat of earthly empire, but also the seat of that constituency that gives impetus to the spread of a spiritual empire as well. While the home base is spiritually deficient and at times almost bankrupt, and the influence of the agents of the home base, be they economic, military or ecclesiastical, can leave a lot to be desired on the field of mission itself, it is still the symbol of orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Moore asks perceptively of Mark, "In attributing absolute, unassailable authority to Jesus, is Mark mirroring Roman imperial ideology, deftly switching Jesus for Caesar ... but thereby undercutting the Gospel's anti-authoritarian thematics and inaugurating an empire of God that inevitably evinces many of the oppressive traits of the Roman empire it displaces?" (ibid: 143). Edinburgh 1910 certainly offers some evidence of this, not only in its muted criticism of empire, but also in its overt appropriation of the language of imperialism and colonialism while explaining its own mission:

> The Protestant Missionary Societies of Christendom through their representatives in this conference, have for the first time given themselves to the careful and comprehensive study of the problem of the evangelisation of the entire non-Christian world. In round numbers 1,000,000,000 of the human race are still to accept the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. Among these vast populations it is our task to establish, not only the Christian Church, but those institutions of Christianity by which the Church shall be perpetuated.

> The Church of Christ, in all its branches represented at this conference, has at its command resources for the completion of this work possessed at no other period in its history. Its membership is larger, its knowledge of the needs and opportunities more thorough, its experience is riper than at any previous period. (WMC VI, 1910: 269)

Commission V: Mission and Pneumatology

The Report of Commission V, *The Preparation of Missionaries* (WMC V), is rare among the Edinburgh documents in making reference to the Holy Spirit. On the call to the mission field, or the subject of vocations, it states, quoting perhaps one of its correspondents, "The real call must come from within; it can only be the work of the Holy Spirit. We cannot forestall vocation or pretend to dispense with it" (WMC V, 1910: 211). The task of evangelisation and the challenge of confronting a hostile world "can only be fulfilled by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost Himself and under the rule of Jesus Christ our Lord" (ibid: 14). The reports themselves are largely, almost exclusively, christocentric. References to the Holy Spirit are scant throughout. Commission V certainly noticed the lack of reference to the Holy Spirit in its own deliberations and the commissioners remarked upon it, while also excusing it, though the discomfort with the oversight is plain to see as one reads between the lines: "There is another phase of this report which needs to be explained and safeguarded, that is the large amount of space given to material ways and means of extending information, securing candidates, raising up effective leaders in the Churches and administering the Societies at home, as contrasted with the comparatively brief references to the Holy Spirit and His perpetual guidance and aid, without which all the plans and devices of men must come to nought. It is taken for granted by the Commission that everything must depend upon Divine guidance, wisdom, and power ... every plan must be made and every step taken as the Holy Spirit shall direct" (WMC V, 1910: 5).

Graham Ward, in debating the action of the Holy Spirit in the relationship between christology and mimesis, highlights the part the Spirit plays in the revelation of Christ, "It is the Holy Spirit then who promotes the telling and the retelling of the Christian event ... The economy of response is governed by the operation of God as Spirit. The mimetic experience, informed and legitimated by the Spirit, is always the anticipation of a revealed Christ" (Ward, 2005: 54). Kirsteen Kim, in her *Mission in the Spirit: The Holy Spirit in Indian Christian Theologies* (2003), which deals at length with the pneumatology of Stanley Samartha, Vandana Mataji and Samuel Rayan, places the Holy Spirit right at the heart of the emergence of Indian theologies. "In the two hundred years or so since the theology of the social reformer Ram Mohan Roy provoked the Serampore missionaries, Indian theologians have been reflecting on the Christian gospel in a distinctively Indian way ... India's strong traditions of spirituality and also philosophies of the Spirit mean that its

Christian theologians have taken a lively interest in the pneumatological dimensions of the gospel" (Kim, 2003: 1). It was Pandipeppi Chenchiah's (1886–1959) understanding of and appreciation of "the immanence of the Spirit in the Fourth Gospel" – since he believed it to be consonant with Indian spirituality – which led to his belief that "the doctrine and personality of the Holy Spirit would play a 'decisive role' in Indian theology" (ibid: 6). Samartha, Vandana and Rayan, although adopting different approaches to the use of pneumatology, nevertheless view it as essential to their theologies precisely because of the Indian context, which lends itself to such a theology (ibid: 13).

Robin Boyd draws attention to the similarities between the pneumatology of Chenchiah, with its cosmic dimensions, and the thought of Teilhard de Chardin. Boyd believes that Chenchiah's view that "Christ *is* already the new creation, and those who are united with him already share in the life of the Kingdom. But the time is coming when, through the power of the Spirit, not only they but the whole cosmos will be incorporated into Christ" (Boyd, 1975: 156), and "de Chardin's conceptions of 'Christification' and the 'Omega-point' at which mankind and the cosmos become conformed to the image of Christ" (ibid: 157) are remarkably close. In his treatment of the christology of the Spirit promoted by Vengal Chakkarai Chetty (1880–1958), Boyd stresses the importance in Chakkarai's thought of the concept that it is the Holy Spirit that reveals Christ. Regarding Chakkarai's contention that in the Church of the Greco-Roman world the historical became over time more important than "first-hand experience of the living Christ" and "the Holy Spirit became a distant and mystical something", where "the historical Jesus emerged in a strange shape, dimmed by allegory and fantastic interpretations of the ordinary facts narrated in the Gospels" (ibid: 173), Boyd writes "Today in India, this order should be reversed, and our consideration of the person of Christ should begin from our direct experience of him through the Spirit" (ibid.). The Holy Spirit is referred to as the "antaryāmin" or "the Indweller" (ibid.).

In tracing the development of the Cosmic Christ in the theology of the English-speaking world prior to its use in the work of Teilhard de Chardin, J. A. Lyons makes a strong case for its pedigree through *Lux Mundi* (1889) and also the works of J. R. Illingworth, particularly his *Divine Immanence* (1898). The concept was dealt with, Lyons claims, by James Denney in 1894 and by A. M. Fairbairn the following year, also by R. L. Ottley in

1896, W. R. Inge in 1907, 1908 and 1915, and H. R. Mackintosh in 1912, among others. P. T. Forsyth wrote on the area in both 1909 and 1910 (Lyons, 1982: 25–31). It was a pity then that, in choosing to diminish the role of the Holy Spirit in its overall missiology, Edinburgh 1910 may have denied itself the benefits of a cosmic christology, illuminated and energised by a missiologically focused pneumatology, which might have been of far more use to its comprehension of itself and its mission in the world, than a leaden christocentrism which was yoked to an imperial world view and suitably weighed down with the baggage such an alliance inevitably carries.

Chapter 5
Interplay and Interdependence in Christological and
Missiological Praxis

In this chapter, I intend to map out christological developments that had a bearing on missiological themes, particularly in the period from 1840 up to post-1910. I will be focusing on areas where christology and missiology tended to intersect directly with each other, but also at some areas where both disciplines touched tangentially. In other words, some developments in both fields were to have more direct influence on praxis than others. I will cover quite a wide area of research and will demonstrate that the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910, far from being a theological *tabula rasa*, actually took place at a time when christology and missiology were in a state of extremely fertile and creative interaction with each other. Of all the commissions of Edinburgh 1910, it was Commission IV that had the most to either say or suggest about this interaction. Even here the voices were muted, but it is possible to listen to the debates that raged throughout Christendom and beyond, in the world outside the doors of the Assembly Hall on the Mound in the city of Edinburgh, and to discern the still relatively embryonic stirrings of the pluralist debate which was yet to come into its maturity.

Extra ecclesiam nulla salus

Writing in *God and the Universe of Faiths* (1973), John Hick, having outlined the approaches towards salvation in the pronouncement of Pope Boniface VIII in 1302, the Council of Florence in 1438–45 and the messages of the Frankfurt Declaration of 1970, the Wheaton Declaration of 1966 and the Congress of World Mission at Chicago in 1960, concludes: "The controlling assumption behind all these utterances, whether medieval Catholic or modern Protestant evangelical is that outside the church, or outside Christianity, there is no salvation" (Hick, 1973: 120, 121). Hick then moves on to reflect on his own experience of this attitude, "Now I think that most of us who are Christians in this country today have inherited essentially this conception of the Christian mission, though we may not have held it so explicitly and emphatically as in the statements I have been quoting. Certainly this view, or rather this assumption, was present in my own mind for at least twenty-five years. I assumed it to be a central Christian position that salvation

is through Christ alone, and therefore that those who do not respond to God through Christ are not saved, but presumably damned or lost" (ibid: 121). Describing the apparent incompatibility of a belief in God as the God of "universal love" and the implication of the dogma *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* ('outside the Church there is no salvation'), Hick goes on to write "It is the weight of this moral contradiction that has driven Christian thinkers in modern times to explore other ways of understanding the human religious situation" (ibid: 122, 123).

Duncan Forrester laments Hick's assertion in his writings, as Forrester interprets it, that "before he came to Birmingham he had not encountered or been challenged by a truly pluralistic religious situation and that his earlier thought had paid scant regard to the issues arising from the existence of a variety of religious systems" (Forrester, 1976: 65). Expressing some surprise that Hick had managed to remain aloof from what Forrester regards as a reasonably rich seam of thought in comparative theology, even at the ascendancy of the Barthian period, Forrester writes – and I quote him at length here because what he has to say is relevant to the task of this chapter –

> Professor Hick may have been for many years unduly isolated from contact with other religions and theological reflection on inter-religious relations, but it is not only surprising but sad that he can produce a stereotype of 'Ptolemaic theology' which is as much a travesty of the Christian tradition as was J. A. T. Robinson's assertion that most people think of God as 'an old man in the sky'. Professor Hick finds that Boniface VIII's declaration of 1302 that 'We are required by faith to believe and hold that there is one catholic and apostolic Church; we firmly believe it and unreservedly profess it; outside it there is neither salvation nor remission of sins ... Further, we decline, say, define and proclaim that to submit to the Roman Pontiff is, for every human creature, an utter necessity of salvation' is a fair statement of the classical teaching of the Church; and he supports his position by referring to two statements in similar vein from contemporary American fundamentalist groups. No one would wish to deny that the principle of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* has indeed been often affirmed in its starkest form; but the theological tradition is far more diversified than Hick would have us believe. It was Justin Martyr who wrote, 'Those who live according to the Logos are Christians, notwithstanding they may pass with you for atheists; and among the Greeks were Socrates and Herakleitos' ... And Augustine wrote: 'What is now called the Christian religion has existed among the ancients from the beginning of the human race until Christ came in the flesh; from which time the true religion, which existed already, began to be called Christian' ... Alexander Duff saw a massive preparation for the Gospel, both positive and negative, as taking place in India and in Indian religion. George Macdonald was put out of his church in Arundel for preaching that the heathen who had never heard the Gospel might be saved ... The thought of missionaries such

as T. E. Slater, Bernard Lucas and J. N. Farquhar starts from an implied rejection of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus,* and indeed for a century and more among Protestants Hick's 'Ptolemaic theology' has been held by a small and uninfluential minority. The real turning point would seem to have been the questioning of belief in limited atonement and the affirmation of the universality of the work of Christ associated with theologians like McLeod Campbell and Erskine of Linlathen, combined with the new knowledge of other religions which was mediated by missionaries like Ziegenbalg and Carey (who were sometimes accused of 'spreading heathen nonsense all over Europe') and scholars like Max Müller and Monier-Williams. Yet this turning point was not so much a Copernican revolution as a recovery of fundamental Christian insights. (ibid: 66,67)

Forrester's belief that Hick had merely recovered Christian insights that had long existed is pertinent to the discussion in this chapter, since I will examine various approaches to the understanding of non-Christian religions at a period when pluralist thinking was very much in its infancy. The christological implications and outcomes of the reflection at work in missiological circles were certainly profound, and the christological influence on missiological trends ensured a mutual enrichment.

Maurice's *The Religions of the World and Their Relations to Christianity*

A seminal thinker in the fields of missiology, christology and their mutual interaction was the English theologian, F. D. Maurice (1805–1872). Maurice's most important and influential work in terms of his approach to non-Christian faiths is his *The Religions of the World and Their Relations to Christianity* (1846),[17] based on eight lectures. "The Boyle lectures developed into what has perhaps been the most popular of all his writings" (Maurice, Vol. I, 1885: 430). They were immediately popular (Porter and Wolf, 1964: 10), reaching a fourth edition in 1861 (which this thesis quotes) and the sixth and final edition in 1886. It was "a pioneer work in the field" (ibid.); "So much more is now known about the world's religions, and Maurice so frequently employs an inadmissible style of asserting what the Buddhist or Hindu 'will have thought' (Leslie Stephen called this tense the 'conjectural preterite' in Maurice), that little attention is usually paid to the book today. It has, however, a surprising relevance for the recent debate by William Ernest Hocking, Hendrik Kraemer, and Arnold Toynbee on the Christian attitude towards the world's religions" (ibid.). Eric Sharpe calls it "his much neglected book" (Sharpe, 1965: 44). H. G. Wood reports in *Frederick Denison Maurice* (1950) that F. J. Powicke believed

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17. Published in 1847.

the Boyle lectures to be so popular because "the book delivered people from a spiritual nightmare. I can well remember the horror with which as a boy I listened to a preacher who besought his hearers to support foreign missions because, apart from the Gospel with its plan of salvation, there was no hope of escape for the heathen from everlasting punishment ... The matter haunted me for years and bred doubts which threw scorn on talk about the love of God. Maurice's book scattered them like the wind" (Wood, 1950: 73).

Crucial to Maurice's theology is his anthropology, and his belief that "mankind stands not in Adam but in Christ" (Maurice, Vol. II, 1885: 358). All of humanity has the status of adopted sons of God, and this is a state that existed in the pre-existent Christ and was made known at the incarnation. Humanity only has to claim this and see itself as God views it, created in his image (Reardon, 1971: 172). Christ was the head of humanity, even of those sections of humanity which neither acknowledged nor accepted him. The scriptures were neither a revelation of doctrine nor of theology, but of the headship of Christ over the human race.

> To the Jews was given a direct intimation of the nature and purpose of their discipline; the Gentiles, through a thicker film of sense, and with fewer helps to penetrate it, might yet, if they would, discover their invisible guide. But these were preparations for a clearer day. Christ the Living Word, the Universal Light, appeared to men, and showed in his own person what processes He was carrying on in the hearts of all ... this manifestation was the signal for the commencement of a new dispensation; sensible emblems were no longer to intercept a man's view of his Lord; national distinctions were to be abolished; men were to be treated as belonging to a higher state than they lost in Adam; they might attain a perfection which did not exist in Adam. (Maurice, Vol. I, 1958: 46)

"The Word of God", writes Maurice, "before he came in the flesh was the light which lightened all men – a principle as much confirmed to me by the evidence of profane as of sacred history" (ibid: 51).

Maurice had listened to a lecture on Islam by Thomas Carlyle in Westminster in 1840 and wrote to his wife afterwards: "The lecture was by far the most animated and vehement I ever heard from him. It was a passionate defence of Mahomet from all the charges that have been brought against him, and a general panegyric upon him and his doctrine" (Maurice, Vol. I, 1885: 282). "I felt throughout how much *more* kind and tolerant towards

the truth in all forms of faith and opinion he can be and should be who does in his heart believe Jesus Christ to be the son of God, and that all systems are feeling after Him as the common centre of the world, than Carlyle can ever be while he regards the world as without a centre (ibid.). He accuses Carlyle, though, of falling into a "wild pantheistic rant" (ibid: 283). However, the historian L. E. Elliott-Binns writes of Carlyle's lecture that "It was something new to have a sympathetic account of the founder of a religion which was a dangerous rival to Christianity" (Elliott-Binns, 1964: 178) and notes that, in the same year as Maurice's Boyle lectures, "there came to England from Germany the man who above all others was to lay the foundations of the science [of comparative religion] in this country, Max Müller" (ibid.).

In 1839 Maurice had written "I have endeavoured in my tracts to prove that if Christ be really the head of every man, and if he really have taken human flesh, there is ground for universal fellowship among men" (Maurice, Vol. I, 1885: 258). Revelation was a key theme in his thought. In *The Religions of the World and Their Relations to Christianity*, Maurice early on makes the assertion, "I ask nothing more than the Hindoo system, and the Hindoo life as evidence that there is in man which demands a Revelation – that there is *not* that in him which makes the Revelation. I ask no clearer proof of the fact that whenever the religious feeling or instinct in man works freely without an historical revelation, it must beget a system of priestcraft. It must be satisfied by God, or overlaid by man, or stifled altogether" (Maurice, 1861: 53, 54). The unifying factor, then, in enabling a universal fellowship is the revelation of Christ. Without this revelation, the desire for unity, and the search to satisfy religious instinct, become subordinate to man-made systems. In tracing changes in attitude towards religious systems in the fifty years prior to 1846, Maurice acknowledges that "a prodigious change has taken place in the feelings of men, generally – of philosophical men particularly – respecting Religious Systems" (ibid: 7). Maurice had taken it upon himself to alter the parameters of Robert Boyle's original purpose in instituting the lecture series, namely that "eight sermons should be preached each year in London for proving the Christian Religion against notorious Infidels, to wit, Atheists, Theists, Pagans, Jews, and Mohametans; not descending lower to any controversies that are among Christians themselves" (ibid: 1). Maurice notes that Boyle offered "frequent encouragement by his pen and purse to the hard-working missionaries who were preaching the Gospel among the North American Indians" (ibid: 2). Boyle wished that through the lectures "the preacher of these Sermons

should be assisting to all companies, and encouraging of them in any undertaking for propagating the Christian religion to foreign parts" (ibid: 1).

However, Boyle would be aware, argued Maurice, that within the field of religious faith, many things would change, including attitudes, "Were we really carrying truth into the distant parts of the earth when we were carrying our own faith into them ... Might not particular soils be adapted to particular religions ... Might not a better day be at hand in which all religions alike should be found to have done their work of partial good, of greater evil, and when something more comprehensive and satisfactory should supersede them? Were not thick shadows overhanging Christendom itself, which must be scattered before it could be the source of light to the world?" (ibid: 3). Referring to Boyle's own reasons for founding the lectures, Maurice writes, "He did not suppose that the actual relation in which truth stood to different systems of belief could alter ... As new regions unfolded themselves to European adventure, new facts modifying or changing previous notions respecting the faiths which prevailed in them might come to light; fresh and more trying experiences might make the past more intelligible" (ibid: 6, 7).

Maurice countered the view prevalent among seventeenth- and eighteenth-century thinkers that religions in the non-Christian sphere were "the inventions of lawgivers and priests", in contrast to Christianity, where "it seemed the office of the Christian apologist to show that there was one exception; to explain why the Gospel could not be referred to this origin; how entirely unlike it was to those forms of belief which were rightly considered deceptions" (ibid: 7). Again referring to the views of F. J. Powicke, Wood reports him as believing that Maurice's Boyle lectures "did more than anything else to inspire that new attitude toward the non-Christian which is now [1930] characteristic of the missionary and those who send him forth" (Wood, 1950: 74). And, although Wood is very aware of the pitfalls into which he felt Maurice had fallen by, agreeing with Lesley Stephen that Maurice was guilty of "reading himself into other minds all the time, turning other people into Mauriceians", he maintains that "there is much sympathetic understanding in his conjectures as to what has gone on in the minds of men of past generations and of other faiths" (ibid: 75).

Maurice observes a fundamental change in attitude towards non-Christian faiths. As seen above, they had been regarded as mere constructs of priestcraft, but now,

Men are beginning to be convinced that if Religion had had only the devices and tricks of statesmen or priests to rest upon it could not have stood at all; for that these are very weak things indeed, which, when they are left to themselves, a popular tempest must carry utterly away. If they have lasted a single day, it must have been because they had something better, truer to themselves to sustain them. This better, truer thing, it seems to be allowed, must be that very faith in men's hearts upon which so many disparaging epithets were cast, and which it was supposed could produce no fruits that were not evil and hurtful. Faith it is now admitted has been the most potent instrument of good to the world; has given to it nearly all which it can call precious (Maurice, 1861: 8).

As can be seen from this quotation, Maurice appears to have abstracted 'faith' as an underlying ground for religious belief. Religion is more than 'devices' or 'tricks', but there is a core truth that transcends the outward appearance of religion, and that is faith. Using this concept of faith as his guide, Maurice then contemplates the possibility of this faith, this core value, being expressed in different forms, whilst still retaining its essential validity and integrity as the ground of religious belief. A similar view is expressed by the Edinburgh missiologist A. G. Hogg, as will be clear in chapter six. Maurice asks,

is there not ground for supposing that all the different religious systems, and not one only, may be legitimate products of that faith which is so essential a part of man's constitution? Are they not manifestly adapted to peculiar times and localities and races? Is it not probable that the theology of all alike is something merely accidental, an imperfect theory about our relations to the universe, which will in due time give place to some other? Have we not reason to suppose that Christianity, instead of being, as we have been taught, a Revelation, has its root in the heart and intellect of man, as much as any other system? ... Must we not expect that it too will lose all its mere theological characteristics, and that what at last survives of it will be something of a very general character, some great ideas of what is good and beautiful, some excellent maxims of life, which may very well assimilate, if they be not actually the same, with the essential principles which are contained in other religions, and which will also, it is hoped, abide forever? (ibid: 9)

Wood explains that Maurice did not claim that each faith possessed the same truth, but rather that in each religion there is some truth; however, this truth has its origin in the source of all truth (Wood, 1950: 77). Every religion, does, nevertheless, have some truth at its core. Furthermore, each religion is a manifestation of the desire of humanity for some grasp of the eternal.

Maurice said of Islam that one could understand the Muslim conquests as "the righteous judgements of God upon guilty nations" (Maurice, 1861: 22) and "In the Christian nations which were permitted to fall under the armies of Islam, almost as much as in those which were avowedly Pagan, the sense of a Divine Almighty Will, to which all human wills were to be bowed, had evaporated amidst the worship of images, amidst moral corruptions, philosophical theories, religious controversies. Notions about God more or less occupied them; but God Himself was not in all their thoughts" (ibid.). Of Mohammed himself, he writes, "He himself declared and felt that he was nothing but a witness for God; his followers received and honoured him as holding that office" (ibid: 20). Of the whole Islamic witness to God, he believes "It was a mercy of God that such a witness, however bare of other supporting principles, however surrounded by confusions, should have been borne to His Name, when His creatures were ready, practically, to forget it" (ibid: 23). Wood lauds Maurice's even-handed approach to the faith: "I am inclined to think Maurice's treatment of Islam the best part of the book" (Wood, 1950: 81). Maurice appears to present and understand Islam in theological rather than merely comparative terms. His emphasis is not simply on comparing 'good' with 'good', but on identifying elements of truth and validity.

Hinduism provides evidence for Maurice that, with reference to non-Christian faiths, "there are deep truths implied in each of these systems" (ibid: 51). "We have then", claims Maurice, "a faith presented to us here, which the more we think of it … the more we know of ourselves, will awaken in us the more of reflection and wonder, and awe. It is the faith not of savages but of men in whose minds respect for learning has occupied all but the highest place" (ibid: 50, 51). Discussing Maurice in general, Kenneth Cracknell claims "he laid the foundations, on the one hand, for a theology of the presence of Christ in other religious traditions, and, on the other, for a missionary theology of completion and fulfilment. These theories were to be worked out in Maurice's Boyle lectures" (Cracknell, 1995: 39). Essentially, it was Maurice's christology that shaped his missiological thought. Jeremy Morris claims that Maurice's approach in an age when "a cohort of Victorian men and women of letters abandoned elements of traditional Christian belief" was to be a paradoxical one, in that "He was seen by his critics as an ally of unbelief, protesting his orthodoxy while cutting away central planks of traditional Christianity. But his effect, as well as his intention, was far from this. Like Coleridge before him, and the central tradition of Anglican theology afterwards, he sought to

defend orthodox belief by demonstrating the depth of its theological and devotional roots. His response to the mid-Victorian crisis of faith, then, amounted to a reinvestigation of the nature of orthodox belief" (Morris, 2005: 168).

Maurice's view of Revelation is crucial to understanding his reinvestigation of Christianity, especially his denial of an absolute distinction between natural and revealed religion. In rejecting this separation, he formulated a theology where "the nature of human beings as created beings who were naturally formed to seek God was a universal truth, presupposing the possibility of natural insight into God and his ways with the world. But the fulfilment or completion of this insight was not possible outside explicit acknowledgement of the Christian faith" (ibid: 170). Furthermore, the publication of Henry Mansel's *The Limits of Religious Thought Examined* (1858), in which Mansel "denied both the possibility of natural knowledge of God, and the notion that that religious ideas, as held by human beings, could reflect religious truth representatively", spurred Maurice on to stress Revelation as "the communication and reception of an existential orientation of human beings to God. Creatureliness, despite the Fall, entailed the possibility and longing of human beings for God" (ibid: 171, 172). Morris goes on to make the point that "a starting point for Maurice's view of Revelation is theological anthropology: human beings are made for God and this implies the possession of a capacity, a spiritual eye or ear, for knowing God, a capacity that belongs to their very being" (ibid: 172). This ability to 'see' is vital to 'seeing' Jesus Christ as Son of Man and Son of God (ibid: 173) and so "the incarnation of Jesus is the focal point of Revelation, and the focal point of God's ordering of the universe" (ibid.). Maurice emphasised what was understood to be a 'doctrine of historical Incarnation' (ibid: 177) in that the Incarnation was, in fact, God revealed not as a doctrine, but as a Person (ibid.). "In his divinity, Christ thus revealed the truth about God" (ibid.). But, it also revealed the truth about humanity and the hypostatic union was a model for the union to which God was calling all of humanity (ibid: 178). Morris discerns a certain kenotic tendency in Maurice's christology, in which "the union of divinity and humanity accorded perfectly with the natural process of intellectual growth" (ibid: 179). Maurice uses the example of the boy Jesus in the Temple, as told in Luke, as an illustration. Divinity reveals itself through humanity (ibid.). So, "the kenotic notion of Incarnation implied here held divine and human natures in balance through the idea of personal growth and development" (ibid.). Revelation was not the epiphany of a system or a set of ideas, but of God as a Person. It was a key feature of his

theological anthropology that human beings were not passive in the revelatory process, but they "had a role in the reception and communication of the truth in Revelation" (ibid: 187).[18]

This kenotic tendency is interesting, since it could be understood as further evidence of Maurice's ability to view the activity of the divine as a gradual unveiling which can happen over time and in various places. The Incarnation, as Christensen writes, "has not changed the reality in which man is placed; it merely illumines and explains that which has always been true of human existence" (Christensen, 1973: 177). This unveiling of Revelation can take place, even in non-Christian religions, because, according to Maurice "the fall did not in the least frustrate the scheme of God. I grant you that it is very wrong to speak as if He had merely devised a scheme as a remedy for the consequences of the fall. Christ was before all things, and by Him all things consist. In Him He created men, and His Incarnation, though it came later than the fall, was really in God's purpose before it" (Maurice, Vol I, 1885: 375, 376). Salvation, then, is the eternal purpose of God. Maurice cites Paul's experience at Athens in Acts 17 as evidence that the non-Christians whom Paul encountered were engaged in a very real and genuine search for the true God (Maurice, 1861: 215, 216). History is the story of humanity's continual taking up into God. Divine Providence imbues history with a teleology, which is at work in the non-Christian faiths.[19]

In Maurice's thought, theology could never begin with humanity, only with God. The existence of human systems, then, was not so much evidence of humanity's reaching out to God, but God's revelation of himself to the world. In the words of one of the authorities on Maurice, Merlin-Davies, "The creature cannot by its own efforts ascend to the Creator, but the Creator reveals himself to the creature, and it is the proof of his goodness that he does so" (Merlin Davies, 1964: 5), and we have already seen above that

18. So, in his lecture on the Epistle to the Hebrews, also in 1846, Maurice wrote: "The revelation of God ... is truly the unveiling of Himself. First, He speaks in that which is most distant from Him, the mere things He has formed; then in men whom He created to rule over these things; lastly, in Him who by the eternal law is the inheritor of all things, in whom and for whom they were created. The order of the world, the succession of ages, spoke of the permanence of God. Here he speaks in Him by whom He framed the order of the world, the succession of times" (Maurice, 1846: 28).
19. "You say that Islam has not fallen before the cross. No, but Islam has become one of God's witnesses for the cross when those who pretend to bear it had really changed it for another standard. You say that Hindooism stands undisturbed by the presence of a triumphant Christian nation. Yes, for Hindooism has been wanted to teach this nation what it is very nearly forgetting itself, very nearly forcing others to forget, that Christianity is not a dream or lie" (Maurice, 1861: 234).

Maurice maintained "I ask nothing more than the Hindoo system, and the Hindoo life as evidence that there is in man which demands a Revelation – that there is *not* that in him which makes the Revelation" (Maurice, 1861: 53, 54). Maurice treats the non-Christian faiths in theological terms, not merely as social or cultural expressions of belief. The theologies of the non-Christian systems were not mere manifestations of popular aspirations, but had their origins in God.[20] Judaism, the "old dispensation", served as a preparation for the coming of the truth. Jesus "shows us what a truth was involved in every part of it; how every part had been a preparation for the full revelation of this truth"(ibid: 167). The prologue of John exhibits a Wisdom christology, in which the Wisdom figure of the Old Testament is manifested in the Word, the Logos. So, Maurice can claim, "The Hindoo dreamed of Light proceeding from a fountain of Light; the Greek of a Child springing from a Father. Naturally, and without effort, St. John recognizes both conceptions; for the divine Wisdom is with him no abstraction" (ibid: 173). Missiologically speaking, Christ cannot, Maurice insists, be a Western product. He is "One who has taken the nature, not of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, but of Man" (ibid: 235). If the religions of the world find their bases not in human kind, but in God, the revelatory foundation of Christianity can offer an interpretative framework within which they can be understood and fulfilled. So, "Do not *all* demand another ground than the human one? Is not Christianity the consistent assertor of that higher ground? Does it not distinctly and consistently refer every human feeling and consciousness to that ground? Is it not *for this reason* able to interpret and reconcile the other religions of the earth? Does it in this way prove itself to be *not* a human system, but *the* Revelation, which human beings require?" (ibid: 240). In terms of Hickian classification, Maurice is advocating a Ptolemaic system with a Christian centre (Hick, 1973: 131).

Christology, missiology and the wider intellectual climate
The nineteenth century saw a rapid rise in interest in world religions, particularly under the banner of the 'comparative study of religion'. Any attempt to cover all the developments in this field in great depth would be impossible for a work of this length, but I will identify each development and related themes and set out briefly how each

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20. "I ask no clearer proof of the fact, that whenever the religious feeling or instinct in man works freely, without an historical revelation, it must beget a system of proestcraft. It must be satisfied by God, or overlaid by man, or stifled altogether (Maurice, 1861: 54:).

contributed to a christological and missiological mosaic that was to traverse the whole of the field of mission and set the scene for more radical changes to occur in the twentieth century. The interesting thing about the interaction between missiology and christology in this period is the concomitant interaction between both of these fields of theology and other intellectual movements of the period, particularly within the spheres of history, science, anthropology, philosophy and the social sciences.

Friedrich Max Müller (1823–1900)

Eric Sharpe describes Müller as both an immanentist and a rationalist in his approach to religion (Sharpe, 1965: 45). He is also, according to Sharpe, a "religious evolutionist, and believed that the 'science of religion' demonstrated that the history of the world in its religious aspect was the history of progress towards Christianity and that non-Christian religions were to be treated as preliminary stages in the same process" (ibid: 46). Müller emerged at a time when the missionary movement could no longer ignore the challenges thrown up, not merely by the teachings and beliefs of other faiths, but by their very *existence*. Clinton Bennett describes Müller as a life-long communicant Christian within the Church of England, albeit with a Lutheran background (Bennett, 1996: 43). Bennett discusses Müller's extensive contributions to the field of Hindu studies, and Müller's background in language and textual study, which led him to translate the Vedas and to edit *The Sacred Books of the East*, and through which he became interested in the scientific study of religion (ibid: 45). As a result, his view of religious development differed, Bennett claims, from that of the anthropologists, since "for him, it lay neither in ancestor worship, dreams, magic, totemic projection or in animistic deifying of objects, but in an inherent human ability to apprehend the sacred" (ibid: 43, 44). Müller's view of the superiority of Christianity, lay not, asserts Sharpe in the form of a claim to "absolute supremacy for historical Christianity" but rather in the belief in "Christianity as a superior stage in religious evolution" in a way which was "only relative. He was convinced that no religion could contain the whole truth … The corollary of this belief is, of course, that as no religion can contain the *whole* truth, as divine revelation is at work in all men, therefore all must contain *some* truth" (Sharpe, 1965: 46).

Sharpe describes his work on *The Sacred Books of the East* as "one of the foundations on which the modern study of the religions of the world rests" (ibid: 44). On the implication for mission of Müller's thought, Sharpe notes his interest in the area and the lecture

which he gave on the subject at Westminster Abbey in 1873 (ibid: 45). Müller, he claims, thought of mission, on the part of any religion, as quite justified since it was a sign that the faith was imbued with life, and in the case of Christianity it was an opportunity to preach the 'original' Christ to non-Christian peoples (ibid: 47). Nicol Macnicol, the Scottish missionary based for many years in India, acknowledges that as a result of Müller's work the study of comparative religion was achieving recognition as a branch of science and that this itself had brought into being a "new era" which would go on to influence "the attitude of missionaries to the non-Christian faiths" (Macnicol, 1930: 116).

Müller's Christianity, though, was neither conventional nor orthodox and was certainly regarded as suspect in Evangelical circles (Sharpe, 1965: 122). Although Müller's approach in his sermon on Christian missions at Westminster in 1873 had set out their legitimacy, he also, Bennett claims, set out to give a strongly positive view of the non-Christian religions and viewed his work on Hinduism as "a counterbalance to the work of those scholars, mainly Christian apologists, who saw nothing but 'darkness' in the Indian tradition" (Bennett, 1996: 47). Certainly, Sharpe claims, Müller "believed that at some date in the future there would arise a new religion derived not from ecclesiastical Christianity as he knew it, but from the varied repositories of truth that are to be found scattered all over the face of the earth" (Sharpe, 1965: 48). Müller himself addresses missionaries in his *Chips from a German Workshop* (1869):

> To the missionary, more particularly, a comparative study of the religions of mankind will be, I believe, of the greatest assistance. Missionaries are apt to look upon all other religions as something totally distinct from their own, as formerly they used to describe the languages of barbarous nations as something more like the twittering of birds than the articulate speech of men. The Science of language has taught us that there is order and wisdom in all languages ... the Science of Religion, I hope, will produce a similar change in our views of barbarous forms of faith and worship; and missionaries, instead of looking for only points of difference, will look out ... for any common ground, any spark of the true light that may still be revived, any altar that may be dedicated afresh to the true God. (Müller, 1985: xxi)

Part of the formation of Müller's comparative thought owed a debt to his association with the liberal Anglicans, according to Garry Trompf, whose "creed can be summed up in two phrases; 'truth before authority' and 'the religion of Christ'. Truth they placed against the dogmatic authoritarianism of the Newmanites; 'the religion of Christ' they

maintained as a simple Christianity of practical love against what they (erroneously) considered to be the exclusively doctrinal preoccupations of the Oxford movement" (Trompf, 1969: 215, 216). With the liberal Anglicans, he believed that history was a teleological process (Forbes 1952: 70, 71). According to Martin Maw, Müller's view of history expressed itself in a "quest for the Logos" (Maw, 1990: 32) and in his belief that the ancient religions had an embryonic purpose within them (ibid.), a view of history echoed within liberal Anglicanism (Forbes, 1952: 85). Müller projected this approach to the process into the future, where he "foresaw Christianity becoming more synthetic, extracting sweetness and light from all kinds of theology, reconstituting these essences within its own body. Thus, as the Aryan had transfigured Semitic conceptions of the Christ, so India would transform current Western comprehension of the Divine (Maw, 1990: 33, 34). So, Müller was supportive of the work of Keshub Chunder Sen as the leader of the Brahmo Samaj and founder of the Church of the New Dispensation, considering him a portend of what was to come, where Bhakti practices would be combined with Logos christology (ibid: 34). Indeed, so positive was Müller about the work of the Brahmo Samaj that his 1873 Westminster lecture on mission was interpreted as "an attack on missionaries' work and a praise of the Indian religious reform movement" (Voigt, 1967: 30, 31).

Andrew Walls makes the point that in many ways, for missionaries, theology was something of a 'given' (Walls, 2002: 42). By this, I take him to mean that while missionaries tended to write on a variety of topics, theology, in itself, was not always the obvious focus of their endeavours. I stress here the word 'obvious'. Walls goes on to underline that it is only in the post-missionary era, when the non-Western churches are in the ascendancy, that it has become clear that missionaries, while often writing on non-theological topics, "opened both new issues and new directions in theology" (ibid.). Walls describes as "prescience", the realisation on the part of Alexander Duff "that the Brahmo Samaj and Keshub Chunder Sen were raising theological issues in India that had not been discussed in Western theology" (ibid.). In an incisive passage, Walls encapsulates the significance of the role of missionaries in influencing theological development:

Perhaps part of the significance of the missionary movement is the very converse of the cultural imperialism with which it is often quite justifiably charged. The missionary movement arose from

the need to live on someone else's terms, to make Christian affirmations within the constraints of someone else's language. The missionary movement is the learning process of Western Christianity. But it is far more, since, in the process of introducing Christian affirmations in other languages, it set them free to move within new systems of thought and discourse. (ibid.)

As noted previously, India would emerge as the locus of the greatest expectation within the missionary movement. In essence, Asia figured far more prominently in the hierarchy of mission than did Africa (ibid: 51, 57–8). "It was in Asia that Christianity appeared to have caught the currents of the time, especially in the newly westward-facing China and Japan ... There was a tier of distinguished Christians from India and China and Japan at the Conference itself, and the University of Edinburgh took the opportunity to bestow the appropriate honorary doctorates on some of them; but there was not a single African present" (ibid: 117).

Importantly, Walls makes the observation that "The tendency to look eastward probably also reflected the balance of missionary effort; it had long been the practice to send the missionaries with superior academic or intellectual credentials to India or China, leaving the celestial cannon fodder for Africa" (ibid.). The interaction between many Christian missionaries and Indian thought led to a particularly vibrant cross-fertilisation between Christianity and Indian religious ideas and philosophies. Robert Frykenberg stresses particularly the long history of Christianity in India, challenging the notion of it being a mere Western European import, and highlighting the non-Western credentials of Christianity itself from its very inception (Frykenberg, 2003: 1). Frykenberg also strongly emphasises the inherent strength of Indian Christianity itself, independently of any Western influence. He rejects the idea that a majority of missionaries in India ever showed "a pre-disposition in favor of colonialism" (ibid: 59), primarily because "missionaries with precolonial, noncolonial, and anti-colonial attitudes have always outnumbered those British missionaries who might have gone so far as to even think of making India an Establishment fiefdom within Anglican Christendom" (ibid: 59, 60) and because of "the essential participation, power and presence of India's own Christians. While deeply influenced by Roman Catholics and Evangelicals, substantial numbers of Thomas Christians never submitted to domination ... India's own Christian leaders always far outnumbered those who came from abroad and made by far the greatest overall impact within societies of India. Thus, while Europeans provided much useful

support, especially in matters institutional and intellectual, there never was any major movement or conversion, certainly no mass movement, in which the primary impetus was not Indian" (ibid: 61).

The study of the interaction between missiology and christology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries encompasses a wide field, dealing in the areas of history, science, anthropology and the social sciences. One theme which emerges as an overriding one and which has an interdisciplinary character is that of incarnation, and along with it the concepts of immanence and transcendence. In turn, the issue of incarnation is closely associated with the topic of Logos christology. As we examine the interaction between missiological and christological concerns, several figures of prominence will emerge, all of whom were working through their christologies and theologies in what might be described as an experimental form. Some ideas were more formed than others, but the tide of christological re-evaluation and re-interpretation, carried with it a great raft of different approaches, at different levels, to re-examining the application of Christian truth in missiological settings. Therefore, what will be seen is not one, great, uniform school of thought, but many different streams, all of them having their origin in the attempts by Christian thinkers, both on the mission field and at home, to reconcile the historic Christian faith with the changing cultural, scientific and religious worlds around them. These streams were being fed, in turn, by the great reservoirs of historical, scientific and theological knowledge which were themselves undergoing seismic shifts. As a result, it will be found that while theologians dealing with missiology and christological concerns may be strongly influenced by the greater and wider debates of the time, such as the debate about evolution, they were making use of these great debates as resources which could, in a sense, be mined and excavated for what they could offer to Christian thought, rather than subscribing to them without question.

The thinkers we will look at, such as J. N. Farquhar, Nicol Macnicol, the authors of *Lux Mundi*, David Cairns, Brooke Fosse Westcott and others, were careful to be selective in their use of 'modern' discoveries, but were not averse in the slightest to making use of sometimes controversial theories in their contemporary world to secure the place of Christianity in that very same world. To put the various streams into context, I want to look at the significance of Commission IV of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference. In its debates and in the material contributed to it by missionaries

themselves, Commission IV encompasses and reflects the primary trajectories of thought which characterise what might be understood as an 'incarnational' approach to missiology. This approach employs an almost scientific understanding of the incarnation itself, expressed in evolutionary terms and making use of the areas of transcendence and immanence. In the decades leading up to Edinburgh 1910, evolutionary models were to play a central role in interpreting incarnational theology. One key influence on the development of incarnational thought was the publication of *Lux Mundi* (1889).

Lux Mundi – Preparing the ground
Perspectives on the role of Lux Mundi in the formation of a missiological context

While *Lux Mundi* itself did not deal with missiological issues *per se*, its publication in 1889 did serve to tie together various strands of thought, whose own exposition and exploration opened the way for a greater reflection and debate on issues that would be of future concern to those who wished to see a complete reinterpretation and reorientation of the gospel message for the later Victorian age. The fields of incarnation, atonement and revelation were later to prove to be the battlegrounds on which pluralism and exclusivism would fight for supremacy. The volume had been published precisely "to put the Catholic faith into its right relation to modern intellectual and moral problems" (Gore, 1890: vii). Charles Gore, who served as Chairman of Edinburgh 1910's Commission III, edited the volume and contributed to it. Its sub-title declared it was *A series of studies in the Religion of the Incarnation.*

The second essay in *Lux Mundi* was written by Aubrey Moore, a man widely read and educated in both philosophy and natural science. Moore tackled the idea of 'immanence'. He proposed "that the revelation of God in Christ is both true and complete, and yet that every new truth which flows in from the side of science, or metaphysics, or the experience of social and political life, is designed in God's providence to make that revelation real, by bringing out its hidden truths" (Moore, 1890: 58). Moore exemplifies the very character of *Lux Mundi* in arguing throughout his essay for a synthesis of new scientific, cultural and intellectual currents of thought with the historic Christian faith. Writing of the position of the modern Christian in relation to new discoveries in these fields, he insists "And so, with regards to all truth, whether it comes from the side of science, or history, or criticism, he adopts neither the method of protest nor the method of surrender, but the method of assimilation" (ibid:58, 59.). He quotes Clement of

Alexandria to make his point that "Truth is an ever-flowing river, into which streams flow in from many sides" (ibid:59.). For Moore, the Christian doctrine of God, particularly Christian Trinitarianism, brings together both immanence and transcendence.

Immanence is a recurring theme encountered at the various junctures between missiology and christology at this period. R. H. S. Boyd refers to it in his discussion of the Christian *bhakti*, and in particular the work of Bishop Aiyadurai Jesudasen Appasamy (1891) (Boyd, 1975: 118). In his discussion of Appasamy's use of the Hindu idea of the *antaryāmin*, or 'indweller', he notes that Appasamy "turns frequently to the idea of the Logos, and seeks to associate this with the Hindu idea of the immanent God, the one who rules with the *antaryāmin*" (ibid: 124). Appasamy holds to the immanent Christ "present in all men" (ibid: 125); however, "men have not yet fully understood him, and so Christ becomes incarnate as a more effective means of God's self-revelation" (ibid.). Appasamy's view of immanence, based largely on the Johannine text "He was in the world" (John 1:10), owes much, Boyd writes, to the philosophy of Rāmānuja "that God is not *identical* with the cosmos, but is rather present and active within it as Logos, related to it in somewhat the same way as the human soul to the body" (ibid: 126). Appasamy understands the Johannine text to refer to "the immanence of Christ the Logos in the world, even before his incarnation" (ibid: 124). In turn, Vengal Chakkarai Chetty (1880–1958), developed this idea, "but for Chakkarai God's immanence takes a special form when Christ becomes incarnate. It is a 'human immanence', when God in Christ comes into the time order for the redemption of men, the immanence of Immanuel, God with us" (ibid: 168). In 1902, Robert Ottley dealt with the issue of immanence in terms of the self-revelation of God in the Old Testament (Ottley, 1902: 41f); and, in *The Person of Jesus Christ* (1912), H. R. Mackintosh wrote that "No conception has seized the modern mind more powerfully than that of Divine immanence" (Mackintosh, 1914: 431).

The impact of Moore's consideration and treatment of immanence is that he linked it firmly to scientific principles. With this linkage, he also achieved the double advantage of satisfying the demands of both Religion and philosophy. Religion, he writes,

demands as the very condition of existence a God who transcends the universe; philosophy, as imperiously, requires his immanence in nature. If either Religion denies God's immanence or Philosophy denies that He transcends the universe, there is absolute antagonism between the two,

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which can only be ended by the abandonment of one or the other. But what we find is that through Philosophy (meaning by that the exercise of the speculative reason in abstraction from morals and religion) the more fully it realizes the immanence of God, the more it tends to deny the transcendence, religion not only has no quarrel with the doctrine of immanence, but the higher the religion the more unreservedly it asserts this immanence as a truth dear to religion itself. The religious equivalent for 'immanence' is 'omnipresence', and the omnipresence of God is a corollary of a true monotheism. (Moore, 1890: 94).

All the contributors to *Lux Mundi* followed a strong Alexandrian approach in their understanding of Christianity and its relationship to the world around them. Bernard Reardon acknowledges their debt not only to Alexandrian theology, but also to the neo-idealism of the philosopher T. H. Green, under whom many of the contributors had studied, writing "Moreover, neo-idealism seemed to accord well with the Alexandrian type of theology which they also found attractive" (Reardon, 1971: 434). Alexandrian theology characteristically sought for resonances of Christianity within the non-Christian or the pre-Christian, reflecting an openness on the part of the Christian believer to accept that the voice and action of God could be discerned in culture. Clement of Alexandria had been concerned at the rejection by the Christianity of his day of the wisdom of the Greek philosophers. In their work *Alexandrian Christianity: Selected Translations of Clement and Origen with Introductions and Notes* (1954), John Oulton and Henry Chadwick argue that Clement understands that he has a vocation "to see to it that the Church is made safe for a more positive evaluation of Greek philosophy. For him it is a pastoral necessity arising out of his work among the cultured classes of Alexandria. To tell a well-educated catechumen that even the greatest of Greek poets and philosophers were inspired by the devil, would be catastrophic" (Oulton and Chadwick, 1954: 18). Clement employed an open approach towards philosophy in general, believing it to have its origin in the divine (ibid: 19).

The contributors to *Lux Mundi* followed Clement's example of engagement with the culture of their day. Just as Clement had an excellent knowledge of Homer and Euripides, Plato and the Stoics, as well as the writings of Philo of Alexandria (ibid: 21), so the various writers of *Lux Mundi* had "a common desire to grapple with the intellectual questions which Christians were having to face at the time" (Ramsey, 1960: 2). Reardon views them as standing in the same line as Coleridge, Maurice and the Cambridge theologians. He writes of them being "in keeping with the already settled

trend of English theology" (Reardon, 1971: 433), joining with the aforementioned influences in "readjusting the balance between the incarnation and the atonement as the focal points in a scheme of Christian doctrine" (ibid.). This was a crucial issue at the time in question, as Evangelicalism had in general tended to "isolate the atonement from other aspects of Christian belief" (ibid.).

Like the Alexandrians, the writers are indebted to the notion of the Logos. Philo of Alexandria, on whose thought Clement and Origen had built, was instrumental in the formation of Logos theology, which Christian philosophers then interpreted in terms of Christ, the second person of the Trinity. According to Joseph McLelland, Philo "sketched a figure having its own life-principle within itself in the form of logos. The cosmic Logos is present in every object and person as seminal logos" (McLelland, 1976: 28). Clement's Logos doctrine gives this principle a pre-eminence above all other powers. The Logos "never moves from his 'watchtower' (a simile from Plato), yet exists everywhere free from limitations" (ibid: 65). Logos christology and immanence were twin concepts with considerable overlap, since both "seemed to provide for the recognition of the divine purpose in history" (Elliott-Binns, 1956: 89). Equating the Logos with Reason, the *Lux Mundi* contributors placed a high value on Reason itself, "because they believed that the divine Logos was at work in the world, guiding and co-operating with, thought never superseding, the spirit of man" (ibid: 90). They were not averse to tracing the operations of the Logos in secular thought, and they valued secular thought as being capable of providing a corrective counteraction against a Christianity that had become a professional enterprise and lost its way (ibid.). Michael Ramsey explains of the *Lux Mundi* authors, "These writers had no doubt as to the uniqueness and supernatural character of the Incarnation. But they gave unwonted emphasis to the belief that He who became incarnate is the Logos who has been at work in the whole created world, in nature and in man, in art and in science, in culture and in progress, and all in such wise that contemporary trends of thought, like evolution or socialism, are not enemies to be fought, but friends who can provide new illuminations of the truth that is in Christ" (Ramsey, 1960: 3).

As has been noted above, the *Lux Mundi* writers owed a certain debt to Idealism, and in particular to the figure of T. H. Green, a renowned Idealist, tutor at Balliol from 1866 and Whyte Professor of Moral Philosophy from 1878 (ibid: 9). "Green's influence was

towards a spiritual interpretation of the world; and consequently towards finding the significance of religion within the world itself" (ibid: 10). The influence of Idealism serves to highlight the importance of Hegelian thought in this period, although it was certainly not universally appreciated and accepted. Vernon Storr acknowledges its importance by writing in 1913, "Our theological outlook to-day is what it is, largely because this philosophical development took place" (Storr, 1913: 199). He notes that at its first appearance, Hegelianism had been welcomed "as a powerful ally to faith and as providing a means for rehabilitating essential Christian doctrine, by showing how such doctrine was capable of a profound speculative rendering" (ibid: 403). However, "it was quickly seen that this philosophy was a solvent of, rather than an aid to, faith" (ibid.). As has been discussed in a previous chapter, Hegel introduced the historical element into the philosophy of religion, with God ever realising Himself in human history. While Green had studied Hegel, he differed from him in many respects, becoming dissatisfied with him (Elliott-Binns, 1956: 69) and gravitating instead towards the thought of Hermann Lotze, whose emphasis was on the idea of personality in God (ibid.). Green opposed "the shallow agnosticism which flourished in his day" and also argued against a morality that was built only on the principles of reward and punishment, while appreciating the role of religion in fostering morality (ibid.). His influence was quite pervasive in Oxford, and although his Christianity was certainly not orthodox in itself, it had a strong influence over many who were given to orthodoxy (ibid.).

Elliott-Binns stresses the role of Idealism in promoting the idea of evolution. The Idealists, he believes, "laid emphasis on the supposed end towards which evolution was working, an end which they regarded as spiritual. The *Lux Mundi* group was almost unique in English theology in giving it a philosophical basis" (ibid: 71, 72). Reardon also highlights the importance of evolution in the tome, particularly the role of two of the authors, R. C. Moberly (1845–1903), whose essay was entitled 'The Incarnation as the basis of dogma', and J. R. Illingworth (1848–1915), who wrote on 'The Incarnation in relation to development', "in connecting the dogma with the modern principle of evolution" (Reardon, 1971: 433). Immanence, evolution and Idealist thought were viewed as evidence of the working of God in the world and the unfolding of his purpose. Reardon writes with regards to Aubrey Moore's approach, "The Immanence of God in all things is the great spiritual lesson which science now teaches; and it wholly fits the ancient doctrines of the Logos and the Trinity" (ibid: 437). The author Clement C. J.

Webb, writing on the emergence of immanentist thought in this period, makes reference to the influence of Comte, with his idea of a unified Humanity evolving towards a perfect state (Webb, 1933: 80–82). Webb describes this immanentism as both positivist and agnostic, excluding religion from "a legitimate place in human life because it conceives of religion as necessarily directed towards a transcendent object" (ibid: 84). He concludes "this type of immanentism, however, is obviously incapable of satisfying the great multitude of men and women who cannot do without religion and who demand an object to worship which shall be more than an admittedly doubtful hypothesis" (ibid.).

F. D. Maurice had been cognisant of the drift towards such an immanentism in his own time, as is evidenced by a letter written by him in 1852 to Fenton Hort, later to become the Cambridge scholar who worked with Brooke Foss Westcott on New Testament studies, but had hoped that this drift would be corrected by Christian transcendence. In this letter, Maurice, in Webb's view, anticipates the whole criterion of religious experience, which was later to emerge as what Webb terms "the true court of appeal in controversies wherein an earlier generation would have rested its case on demonstrations which took no account of any experience specifically religious in character" (ibid: 87). Reardon writes that "The emphasis on immanence , of course, fitted in well with the Logos theology, and seemed to provide for the recognition of the divine purpose in history; but it passed over much that was fundamental in Christian tradition as contained in the Bible, in earlier thinkers, and in liturgy" (Reardon, 1966: 89). Reardon singles out for mention the figure of J. R. Illingworth, "outstanding in his group, and indeed, among Christian philosophers of his day" (ibid.). Many of Illingworth's books had been translated into several languages, including Chinese and Japanese (ibid: 89, 90). Illingworth had not only contributed to *Lux Mundi*, but had also written a major work, *Divine Immanence* (1898). Michael Ramsey refers to Illingworth's belief that "All great teachers, of whatever kind, are vehicles of revelation" (Ramsey, 1960: 3) and reiterates that such a view, while it might have seemed somewhat revolutionary to Illingworth's readers, and "might be suspected of smelling of the immanentism in some contemporary thought" (ibid.), was "no less a principle as old as the Greek Fathers" (ibid.).

Thomas Hill Green and Edward Caird had both provided a philosophical underpinning which demonstrated that "reality is something other and more than a concatenation of facts, perceived by the senses or inferred from what is so perceived" (Webb, 1933: 101).

Both spoke to a world which was divided in its attention to either the traditional creation narrative about the origin of the cosmos, or that being put forward in that very age by the natural sciences (ibid.). Webb claims, "To such a generation the new idealistic philosophy professed itself able to show that the true object of religious faith and hope was to be sought not *without* but *within* the world; only if it were to be found there, the world must be envisaged not, after the abstract fashion of the natural sciences, as mere 'matter in motion', but in its concrete reality as the object of mind, unintelligible apart from the mind whose object it is" (ibid: 102). Furthermore, this philosophy claimed to be able "to affirm that the great doctrines of Christianity, of manhood taken into God ... were true, not indeed as the record or the anticipation of events miraculous and supernatural in a far distant past or in a remote future quite unlike the present, but rather as statements of the inner significance of the spiritual life of man in every age, of the whole history of civilisation itself" (ibid.). So, in Webb's view, the idealist philosophy interpreted experience and reasserted Christian dogmas, not to "baffle our reason" (ibid.), but as the "expression of principles already implied in the ordinary procedure of that reason and partially embodied in the civilisation which it had created" (ibid: 102, 103).

Edward Caird understood Hegel as completely rejecting ordinary supernaturalism in his (Hegel's) interpretation of religious experience. Hegel, he felt, had viewed the supernatural world as being *within* rather than *beyond* the natural and had an innate distrust of any sense of 'withdrawal from the world' (ibid: 105, 106). Caird reiterated Hegel's hostility to any claims to have gained knowledge of God through special inspiration which could exclude the ordinary use of reason and experience of life (ibid: 106). Therefore, idealist philosophy "was above all things concerned to find within *this* world ... those religious values which had so often been thought of as belonging to another world than this where 'they neither marry nor are given in marriage', and as manifested in this world only or chiefly through institutions whose authority and sanctions were supernational" (ibid: 107, 108). In other words, not even the instruments of the State or of culture could be viewed, in this mode of thought, as replacing in any way the satisfaction which only God could provide (ibid: 108). Webb asserts that in this substitution of the secular for the religious, the idealist philosophers were, in actuality, standing in a line of tradition from the Reformation itself and were also very much in harmony with the thought of F. D. Maurice, who had himself been a strong influence on

Green (ibid.). Maurice's concern with the issue of immortality, the immortal soul and matters eternal was echoed to some extent in the insights of Green, who, while he understood immortality chiefly in the context of the indestructibility of thought itself, and its subsequent eternal quality, nevertheless gave a certain philosophical justification to the notion of an immortal soul (ibid: 109, 110). Similarly with Caird, who held that in grasping the world itself as being a manifestation of a rational and moral principle, that principle could be said to have as its end the training of immortal spirits. In immanentist terms, Caird sees the world as having an outcome which is congruent with the realisation of the Will of God, and the highest object of that will could only be immortal life for beings made in God's own image (ibid: 111).

For the theologians of the period, then, Idealist philosophy provided space for a world which was not mechanistically soulless "by affirming that we cannot conceive of objects at all apart from self-conscious mind or spirit, which is thus presupposed by the very facts which the natural sciences set out to explain" (ibid: 112). The philosophy "claimed supreme worth for self-conscious personality as the only possible subject of the spiritual activities, knowledge and love and goodness, on which we set the highest value, and as therefore the only adequate revelation of the ultimate Reality which we call God. It is not difficult to see how the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, as it had no doubt coloured the thought of those who taught this philosophy, might seem to harmonize with their conclusions" (ibid.). Even the Church itself could fit into the evolutionary paradigm, since in Hegelian terms, society was seen as an organism (ibid.). According to Webb, "it is not surprising to find that the idealism of Green formed the background of the theology of the ... collection of theological essays which appeared in 1889 and in other writings of such contributors to that collection as Henry Scott Holland, John Richard Illingworth, and Robert Campbell Moberly" (ibid: 113). That same Idealist philosophy was also behind the publication of R. J. Campbell's *The New Theology* (1907), the immanentism of which was "extreme and uncritical" (ibid: 114). The *Lux Mundi* writers, aware that immanentism *in extremis* could lead to unorthodox belief, focused on the revival of "the conception, which they found already present in certain of the Greek Fathers of the Church, of the Incarnation as the culmination of a self-revelation of the Divine Logos who had from the first been immanent in the religious history of mankind" (ibid.). Robert Ottley, writes in 1902, "The function of the Logos is to be the essential

revealer and interpreter of the invisible Father" (Ottley, 1902: 197). He goes on to discuss the theology of Logos christology of Justin Martyr,

> But God left not Himself without a witness even among the gentiles. To them too He made Himself known by partial manifestations. Justin teaches that the Logos is the Divine Reason immanent or sporadic' in humanity. There is an unconscious prophecy in human thought corresponding to the conscious prophecy of Hebrew seers. Every man in every race possesses an implanted germ of the Word, by the power of which he apprehends whatever truth, moral or intellectual, he knows. This striking thought is distinctive of Justin, though it is more completely developed by the Alexandrians. It is true that the manifestation of the Word in heathen sages was only fragmentary and partial; but so far as they were guided in moral conduct, or in philosophic speculation, by the light of the indwelling Logos, they were Christians and friends of Christ. Reason in man is in fact 'the candle of the Lord', the manifestation of the Divine Reason. (ibid: 197, 198)

As has been mentioned above, immanentism and evolution worked together as twin concepts which demonstrated the activity of the divine presence in the world. It was Aubrey Moore, in particular, who attempted to show how evolution could be seen not as a means of contradiction against a divine creation, but rather as a way of illuminating it (Ramsey, 1960: 3). As has been seen, Moore was keen to argue that, while religion and philosophy might conceptualise the idea of God in different ways, religion being focused on the transcendent and philosophy and the immanent, they could, nevertheless work in harmony and this harmonious relationship was best seen within the Christian concept of the Trinity. Evolution, according to Moore, had revolutionised the way in which God's interaction with the world was conceived.

> The one absolutely impossible conception of God, in the present day, is that which represents Him as an occasional Visitor. Science had pushed the deist's God farther, and farther away, and at that moment when it seemed as if He would be thrust out altogether, Darwinism appeared, and, under the guise of a foe, did the work of a friend. It has conferred upon philosophy and religion an inestimable benefit, by shewing us that we must choose between two alternatives. Either God is everywhere present in nature, or He is nowhere. He cannot be here and not there. (Moore, 1890: 99)

J. R. Illingworth, who was himself a staunch Idealist (Sell, 1995: 65ff), had also written in the language and conceptual framework of evolution in his *Lux Mundi* essay on 'The Incarnation and development'. Of the theory of evolution itself, he writes "History has

repeated itself, and another of the 'oppositions' of science to theology has proved upon inquiry to be no opposition at all … Organisms, nations, languages, institutions, customs, creeds, have all come to be regarded in the light of their development, and we feel that to understand what a thing really is, we must examine how it came to be. Evolution is in the air. It is the category of the age" (Illingworth, 1890: 181). He speaks of Christ and the Incarnation in similar evolutionary language, "Now, in scientific language, the Incarnation may be said to have introduced a new species into the world, a Divine man transcending past humanity, as humanity transcended the rest of the animal creation, and communicating His vital energy by a spiritual process to subsequent generations of men" (ibid: 207). Referring to the activity of God in the realms of science, philosophy and art, he goes on, "Here the Christian doctrine is twofold: first, that all the objects of our thought, mathematical relations, scientific laws, social systems, ideals of art, are ideas of the Divine Wisdom, the Logos, written upon the pages of the world; and secondly, that our power of reading them, our thinking faculty acts and can only act rightly by Divine assistance" (ibid: 195). In the evolutionary vision, "Our Creator will be known to have worked otherwise indeed than we had thought, but in a way quite as conceivable, and to the imagination more magnificent" (ibid.).

Illingworth deplored the attention which the Reformers had given to the Atonement, at the expense, he believed, of the Incarnation. This had led to the Reformers being "so occupied with what is now called Soteriology, or the scheme of salvation, that they paid but scant attention to the other aspects of the Gospel" (ibid: 183). In doing so, they had not followed the example of the thinkers of the early Church, who had been able to realise "that redemption was a means to an end, and that end the reconsecration of the whole universe to God" (ibid.). Consequently, "the very completeness of their grasp on the Atonement led them to dwell upon the cosmical significance of the Incarnation, its purpose to 'gather all things in one.' For it was an age in which the problems of the universe were keenly felt" (ibid.). Ramsey regards Illingworth as having been "incautious" here, "inasmuch as it is the doctrine of the Atonement which guards the difference between true and false types of immanentism" (Ramsey, 1960: 4).

Aubrey Moore, however, makes a more judicious argument, in which he equates the idea of immanence with the religious notion of 'omnipresence', and he then makes the point that "the omnipresence of God is the corollary of true monotheism" (Moore, 1890: 94).

The doctrine of the omnipresence of God and the philosophical doctrine of immanence are 'fused' together by the Christian doctrine of the "Trinity in Unity" (ibid: 95). The early Church thinkers had been concerned to emphasise the separateness of God from the world, so as to avoid any pantheistic confusion, and they stressed the omnipresence of God over and against "a Judaising deism" (ibid.). "But", concludes Moore, "the union of God's transcendence with His immanence, and with it the fusion of the religious with the philosophic idea of God, is only consciously completed by the Doctrine of the Trinity" (ibid.). Moore then underlines with some force the "immanence of reason in the universe, and the rational coherence of all its parts" (ibid.) and employs in defence of his argument the Christian doctrine of the Logos, and he equates the Logos and this 'reason' together to make a powerful argument for the presence of God in the unfolding of the cosmos, "enlightening things seen and unseen, holding and binding all together in Himself" (ibid.), using the language of St Athanasius to do so (ibid: 95, 96).

The prime consequence of this revival of interest in Greek theology was a strong emphasis on the immanence of the divine in the world, in the institutions and historical unfolding of the world, and in the fields of science, art and culture (Elliott-Binns, 1956: 230). This immanence was itself very much a reaction against the transcendent inheritance of Deism (ibid: 231). And the tendency of this shift towards immanence to appeal to Trinitarian doctrine arose from the desire to highlight "the idea of a living 'society', a diversity in unity, at the heart of the universe" as opposed to "a lonely and isolated Creator, dwelling aloof" (ibid: 235). The Greek Fathers, especially the Alexandrians, viewed the Incarnation not as an event made necessary by the Fall of man, but part of the eternal plan of God from the beginning (ibid: 244). Therefore, "Man had been made in the divine image, and the Logos, or Word of God, had been continually active in the world, preparing the way for the supreme revelation of Himself in a historical person" (ibid.). L. E. Elliott-Binns argues that by the suggestion in *Lux Mundi* that "the Incarnation, as the culmination of a long process, was in some sense itself the Atonement", the writers actually "introduced the notions of evolution and divine immanence 'into the very heart of the traditional scheme of doctrine'; but this conception seemed to reduce the Cross almost to an accidental, though inseparable, accompaniment of the Incarnation" (ibid.). The views expressed in *Lux Mundi* caused considerable disquiet in more conservative quarters of the Church of England: although they were accepted in part by sections of the Anglo-Catholic wing, the Evangelical

section of the Church was very upset indeed (ibid: 312). The idea of God at work in worldly pursuits was difficult to conceive for many, though certainly not all, as shall be seen. However, as Elliott-Binns writes, for some, "the limitations of their outlook led them to regard with suspicion the effects of any movement that was not definitely 'religious'. In consequence such subjects such as art, literature and philosophy ... were regarded by them of small importance. There was an immense gap between the wisdom of the world and the wisdom of the Gospel" (ibid.).

From the christological perspective, Alan Sell refers to the view of Robert Mackintosh, writing in 1908 on the topic of 'Recent philosophy and Christian doctrine'. Mackintosh writes, "Philosophy, however well disposed, and however competent in its own sphere, must not lay down the law to Christian doctrine; which strives to answer the other, the immense question, *What thinkest thou of Christ?*" (Sell, 1995: 195). Sell makes the important point, "It is certainly the case that logically christology takes precedence over soteriology; Christ can only do what he does because he is who he is" (ibid: 194). And, Sell believes, the philosophers of Mackintosh's time, and certainly the Idealist philosophers, were making assertions which have to be viewed as christological (ibid: 195).

Sell supports the stance of Elliott-Binns, by recognising that Illingworth, in particular, produces a fusion of the Johannine idea of abiding in Christ and a Pauline 'Christ mysticism', with philosophical immanentism, in which the boundaries between the atonement and the incarnation are very much blurred. More than this, as has been mentioned above about *Lux Mundi* as a whole, Illingworth also crucially separates the incarnation from the atonement by dispensing with the role of the Incarnation as being predicated on the Fall of humankind. The Incarnation becomes almost a predestined event, which would have taken place irrespective of the need for it – as orthodox belief stood – as a remedy for sin. The Incarnation, in Illingworth's evolutionary thought, takes on an evolutionary character, being the very climax of creation (ibid: 196). Human failure, then could not stand in the way of the Incarnation, nor could it provide a reason for its happening. In making the distinction he made between the Incarnation and the Atonement, and in sidelining the issue of sin, Illingworth made a way for God to work in the world purely through the fact that it had been created by him and an object of his love. Sin no longer stood in the way of the activity of God in the world, a situation which had profound missiological implications, since the world system was not as inimical to

God as had been traditionally thought and was, in fact, in Alexandrian terms, capable of being infused with the activity of God in its institutions and belief systems.

So, as has been quoted above, the great thinkers of the early Church were led by their awareness that redemption was a means to an end, that end being the reconsecration of the universe to God, "to dwell upon the cosmical significance of the Incarnation, its purpose to 'gather all things in one' ... So it was that the theology of the Incarnation was gradually drawn out from the teachings of St Paul and of St John. The identity of Him who was made man and dwelt among us ... His eternal pre-existence as the reason and the word of God, the Logos; His indwelling presence in the universe as the source and condition of all its life, and in man as the light of His intellectual being" (Illingworth, 1890: 183, 184). Isaak Dorner had also proposed a belief whereby the Incarnation and the Atonement could both be reconciled in a unique way, with his assertion, again in Idealist and Hegelian terms, that incarnation was not confined to being progressive in world history itself, but was actually progressive in the very person of Jesus, the consummation of incarnation taking place at the Atonement, with the taking place of the full union of the human and the divine as a result of the obedience and self-surrender of Jesus (Macquarrie, 1990: 232).

Missiological ramifications of christological developments

The cumulative development of christological reinterpretation and re-evaluation was to have significant implications for missiological thought, as missionaries and mission thinkers interpreted christological changes in ways that enabled them to make sense of the paradox of an apparently exclusivist Gospel for a world that they increasingly understood as manifesting signs of the activity, presence and purpose of God. This became clear in the deliberations and preparations for Commission IV of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, and it was this particular commission that gave the opportunity to missiologists and missionaries themselves on the field to express their own emerging theologies, where missiology and christology were interacting in dynamic interplay, and to use the christo-missiological background outlined above and throughout to give basis and underpinning to their ideas. Christology had come to the fore, as Isaak August Dorner had stated in 1856 (McGrath, 1986: 53), and christological developments had become the driving force in many areas of theology (ibid.), setting new agendas and providing the engine of change.

Schleiermacher's wish to have a christo-centric principle whereby everything in theology would be directly related to the redemptive work of Christ, was in the process of being fulfilled (ibid.). Missiology, in particular, found itself interacting with the christo-centric principle in a unique way, since mission's preoccupation with the soteriological and the redemptive was inevitably influenced in a transformative way by a christological shift towards the immanent and the Logos-centred. Immanence and Logos theology enabled missiology to escape its exclusivist parameters: christo-centrism did not need to be fixed on the Western, ecclesiastical, Anglo-Saxon or European Christ any more. Christo-centrism could now be understood in terms of the cosmic Christ, who was able to traverse cultural, national and religious borders. Revelation was no longer dependent on adherence to a culture-bound, largely Western tradition, but was able to transcend the church-mediated kerygma and appeal directly to the hearts of humankind. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theology had also witnessed the erosion of what could be viewed as an extreme Calvinist understanding of the Sovereignty of God, and the image of God as a judge, in particular. The notion of God as judge was gradually being supplanted by that of God as Father.

This emphasis on the fatherhood of God had been strongly promoted through the work of John McLeod Campbell (1800–1872), the Scottish theologian, whose major work, *The Nature of the Atonement* (1856), had argued for a theology that had its roots, not in abstract notions of penal substitution, but in recovering the relationship between the death of Christ and his Incarnation. Like Maurice, Campbell argued for the idea of Christ as both head and representative of humanity: "Christ indeed is the head and representative of humanity, and his own righteousness is to be transmitted to the redeemed human race. Men die with him in order to rise again to a new life" (Reardon, 1971: 408). Roland Hind writes of the resonances between Maurice and Campbell's theology of the universal headship of Christ: "All humanity is so summed up in Him that when He died, all mankind died to sin 'potentially'. He is identified with all humanity, and His sufferings and death were the expression of this solidarity" (Hind, 1972: 339). McLeod Campbell makes much himself of the relationship between the Atonement and the Incarnation, writing, "thus is the atonement, not only what was rendered possible by the incarnation, but itself a development of the incarnation" (McLeod Campbell, 1886: 122). In McLeod Campbell's thought, the relationship between the two great doctrines shows not that the

Atonement was "the great necessity in reference to man's salvation out of which the necessity for the incarnation arose" (ibid: xvi), and neither "is the incarnation to be regarded as the primary and the highest fact in the history of God's relation to man, in the light of which God's interest in man and purpose in man can truly be seen" (ibid.). The Atonement is "to be contemplated as taking place in order to be the fulfilment of the divine purpose for man which the incarnation reveals" (ibid.). One result of this focus on the Incarnation "may be the overwhelming sense of the deep root of man's relation to God, of man's inconceivable preciousness in the sight of God ... As divine love fitted to subdue man's enmity, as divine power entering into humanity and equal to the task of regenerating all humanity, the incarnation may seem a Gospel sufficient to meet all the need of man" (ibid: xix). McLeod Campbell's opposition to the Calvinistic limitation of the Atonement to the elect meant that the sacrifice of Christ was accounted to all (Hind, 1972: 145). The gospel was a universal one, otherwise there is no ground for any assurance on behalf of humanity (ibid: 170). While drawing a clear distinction between universal redemption and universal atonement, he held that "A universal atonement is the only satisfactory reason for preaching the gospel to all" (ibid: 171).

The Alexandrian Theology of Brooke Foss Westcott

Even though Westcott's christology was very much in the character of the theology of F. D. Maurice, his biographer, Joseph Clayton, points out that Westcott had avoided reading Maurice's works, precisely because he did not want his own intellectual development to become dependent on Maurician thought; so, while "Westcott's theology is distinctly Maurician, it was not learnt from Maurice" (Clayton, 1906, 24). According to Henry Chadwick, "He shared with F. D. Maurice a horror of theology that was too self-confident and clear-cut" (Chadwick, 1960: 3). Westcott had a strong interest in mission, and on his death the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), was moved to remember that "His interest in the Society was manifested by many public utterances, notably in its Bicentenary Year" (Westcott, 1903: 409) and to acknowledge his influence on "the cause of peace at home and the extension of Christ's kingdom abroad" (ibid.). It was the tribute paid to him by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, though, which gives the greater insight into his interest in mission and missiology:

the Society cannot forget that the life of Bishop Westcott has had a missionary influence of exceptional range and force. It was as an expert that he wrote or spoke on Missionary subjects. When Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge he was one of the leaders connected with the brotherhood of that University at Delhi; as a father he gave no fewer than four of his own sons to the Society's missions in India; and as Bishop he encouraged his clergy to listen to the call to engage in work abroad, and laboured to foster the missionary spirit among the people of his diocese. (ibid: 410)

The Delhi Brotherhood, members of the Cambridge Mission in Delhi, wrote of his commitment to mission that "it was to his inspiring influence and suggestion that the Cambridge mission owes its origin" (Westcott, 1903: 411), and they go on to credit him with "the marked revival of the missionary spirit" (ibid.).

Westcott is very difficult to pigeonhole as a thinker, something not helped by the obscurity of much of his writing (Olofsson, 1979: 2). In his study of Westcott's theology, however, Folke Olofsson acknowledges Westcott's debt to the early Church and to early Christian thinkers (ibid: 3). Although not strictly a Hegelian, Westcott nevertheless, in Hegelian terms, believed strongly that as one enters into higher logic, then differences will emerge which may demonstrate that truth is a contradiction (Newsome, 1969: 12). Westcott greatly enjoyed pondering upon the implications of the confrontation between two contradictory truths (ibid.). To apprehend truth in its fullness, the seeker needed to look in what might seem the most unlikely of places, usually in contrary arguments or systems. He shared with Maurice the belief that every party sees only a portion of the truth and needs the truth of his or her opponent to gain a sense of complete truth (ibid.). Therefore, while acknowledging Christian truth, Westcott was open to discerning and recognising the truth that might emerge from opposing beliefs (ibid.). It was, though, his Alexandrian Platonism, which in turn influenced his christology, that more than anything else formed his missiology. His Platonism had been influenced not only by Maurice, but Coleridge as well (ibid: 16). His theology was also firmly Johannine (ibid: 18).

In *The Gospel According to St John* (1882), Westcott demonstrates an ability to recognise the value of revelation in other religious traditions in his commentary on John 14:6. In his treatment of the verse, where Jesus states that he is "the way, the truth and the life", Westcott not only interprets 'the way' in Christian terms, but also considers the use "of the corresponding word in the Chinese mystical system of Lao-tse" (Westcott, 1882:

202). He discusses the use of the Tao, its meaning as 'way' or 'chief way' and its application "to the supreme cause, the way or passage through which everything enters into life, and at the same time to the way of highest perfection" (ibid.), recognising and acknowledging the resonances between this tradition and the Christian one, and interpreting Christ's own self-view with a revelation of the same in the Lao-tse system. On the issue of the truth, he refers to Maimonides as a way of understanding more fully the Johannine conception of the Truth (ibid.). He moves on to discuss verse 7, where Jesus says that no one can come to the Father, except through Jesus himself, and here Westcott concludes with the quite firm statement that "It does not follow that everyone who is guided by Christ is directly conscious of His guidance" (ibid.).

Taken as a whole, the commentary on both of these verses demonstrates a belief that both the way and the truth could manifest themselves in manner and in revelation that need not necessarily be within traditional Christian parameters. The belief in an 'unconscious' adherence to Christ presages, in Kenneth Cracknell's view, what might be termed 'inclusive' Logos christology, by which the faith of non-Christians might be interpreted (Cracknell, 1995: 61). In a letter to F. A. Hort, written in August 1860, Westcott underlines his incarnational focus, writing, "I should like to have the Incarnation as a centre, and on either side the preparation for it and the apprehension of it in history" (Westcott, 1903: 214). In his discussion of the Fall of humanity, Westcott is at pains to state his view that humanity never loses the *imago Dei* and the nature of the human being is still able to enjoy union with God, even if this nature is hampered by the consequences of the Fall. Olofsson writes, of Westcott's anthropology, "Even after the Fall, man still possesses the capacity to form a true conception of himself and his position in the world, to distinguish between good and evil and also to do good; he can also obtain a true idea of who God is" (Olofsson, 1979: 94).

In *Christus Consummator* (1886), Westcott expounds his views in great detail. He, also, is at pains to separate the Incarnation from its dependence on the Fall: "The Incarnation is made to commonly depend on the Fall. And the whole tenour of revelation, as I conceive, leads us to regard the Incarnation as inherently involved in Creation" (Westcott, 1890: 104). The very first indication of 'good news' or 'gospel' is not that based on Genesis 3:15, where we are told that Jesus will 'bruise' the head of Satan, but rather that depending on Genesis 1:26f, where we are told that God has created

humankind in his own image (ibid.). "This original capacity of man was the measure of the love of God for His creature. Sin could not increase it; nothing less than personal union with God could fulfil it. The fitness and the necessity of the Incarnation exist therefore from the moment when man was made" (ibid.). So, "man did not lose the image of God by the Fall. His essential nature still remained capable of union with God, but it was burdened and hampered" (ibid: 118).

Interestingly, Olofsson uses Hickian terminology in his own discussion of Westcott's understanding of the Incarnation. Westcott, he believes, is developing a christology that is profoundly at odds with the christology of Augustine, which placed sin at the very centre of the theological system. Westcott strongly believed that Augustinianism was not conducive to the realisation of truth, since Augustine had approached the faith from a legalistic standpoint which viewed God as a harsh Sovereign (Newsome, 1969: 25). Westcott's shift of theological emphasis from the concept of sin to the love of God is "a Copernican revolution in theology. The revolutionary feature of such a theology lies in the fact that, instead of starting in the sin of man and thereby remaining anthropocentric, it starts from God's loving will, revealed already at the Creation, and thereby becomes *theocentric*" (Olofsson, 1979: 104, 105).

This shift becomes fundamentally christological where Westcott deals with the way in which this theocentric, loving will is mediated: "In God's Incarnation in Christ and in the Son's Revelation of the Father in his perfect Sonship, Westcott sees the consummation of this revelation of the Fatherhood of God, but, in the revelation that runs through history, it is also possible to discern how the God imagined by man is also, with varying degrees of clarity regarded as a father" (ibid: 129, 230). As an example, Westcott refers to the Greek notion of Zeus as a father of men and the philosophers' idea of there being a father of the universe (ibid.). In Westcott's thought, the concept of Logos is to be separated from that of Messiah. "While the Logos concept transcends time, the concept of the Messiah is very definitely realized within time. Furthermore, the idea of Logos implies a correspondence in some sense to human nature and the Logos is therefore related to all mankind, whereas the idea of Messiah belongs to ... the Chosen People" (ibid: 145). For Westcott, the idea of Christ as 'Consummator' or 'fulfiller' is paramount (ibid: 178). "In that Christ completes the destiny of man, he also completes that of all creation" (ibid.). His *Christus Consummator* is all about 'fulfilment'. He writes, "We must

learn to think of the *summing up of all things in Christ* in the phrase of St Paul ... We must dare ... to look beyond Christ the Consoler to Christ the Fulfiller" (Westcott, 1890: 12). In emphasising the link between Incarnation and creation, "It teaches us to welcome and to use the imperfect conclusions of that Naturalism which offers a partial homage to the majestic progress of the physical order. It confirms the splendid visions which lend an unreal beauty to Pantheism, by pointing to the end when *God shall be all in all*" (ibid: 106). He goes on, "It throws light upon the broken and chequered sum of human existence. It helps us to understand how the scattered fragments in which man's endowments have hitherto been realised combine to form a whole" (ibid.).

It can be seen from the above that Westcott, in his references to 'Naturalism' and 'Pantheism', has in mind the fulfilment in Christ of even the realms of science and non-monotheistic belief systems. Olofsson contrasts the theological concerns of the Consummator image with that of *Christus Redemptor*, the prime and normative christological motif of Westcott's age. "The images in which the situation of sinful man before God are expressed determine the representation of Christus Redemptor" (Olofsson, 1979: 179). These expressions of Christ are not mutually exclusive, and Olofsson counsels against the hazard of making too wide a distinction between them, but Cracknell makes the relevant point that "The God-centred vision of the place of Christ was incomparably different from the Jesus-centred focus of much late nineteenth-century Christianity, in which Jesus was seen as a personal Redeemer offering private consolations and individualist spiritual experiences" (Cracknell. 1995: 63). David Newsome observes that Westcott particularly valued the thought of Origen, especially Origen's teaching, based on both Plato and the Johannine Fourth Gospel, that stressed that the world itself was capable of manifesting the goodness and righteousness of God (Newsome, 1969: 24). Westcott, then, promoted a view of the world as a place with which God could establish a relationship. The Christian message had relevance for the world as a whole, for all of creation, and not only the individual. Other expressions of faith were seen positively and this missiological outlook rested firmly on his christological convictions.

Sin, suffering, sorrow are not the ultimate facts of life. These are the work of an enemy; and the work of our God and Saviour lies deeper. The Creation stands behind the Fall, the counsel of the Father's love behind the self-assertion of man's wilfulness. And I believe that if we are to do our

work we must learn to think, not only of the redemption of man but also of the accomplishment of the divine purpose for all that God has made. We must learn to think of that *summing up of all things in Christ,* in the phrase of St Paul, which crowns the last aspirations of physicist and historian with a final benediction. (Westcott, 1890: 11, 12)

In Westcott's theology, the discoveries of the age were destined to fulfilment in Christ (ibid: 111) in the same way that the vision of Plato himself had "found its confirmation and fulfilment" in the life and teachings of Christ (ibid: 84).

This Neoplatonic influence is an important one: it is a seam running right through the strata of the various theological edifices, whether missiological or christological, that deal with the issue of mediation of the gospel message. Hearkening back to what has been termed Clement of Alexandria's "hellenization of Christianity", it is the result of "the appropriation and use of Hellenistic philosophical and ethical concepts for the expression of the Christian faith", an appropriation in which Plato played a major part (Outler, 1940: 217). In Clement's thought, philosophy "is a work of Divine Providence" (ibid: 219), and Clement's role as a "Christian Platonist" was greatly strengthened by Charles Bigg's Bampton Lectures of 1886 (ibid: 220). Albert C. Outler goes so far as to say that "Next to Holy Writ, which is easily first among Clement's sources, stand the writings of Plato" (ibid: 222). Clement's ideas are Platonic, according to Outler, because "They both assume, as axiomatic, the concept of nature as an organic whole. The world, though complex, is intelligible in its deepest reality, and man has, in some degree or other, the capacity for coming to a knowledge of this intelligible world" (ibid: 225). Also, "Clement's definition of soul closely parallels that of Plato" (ibid: 226) and, in Plato's *Timaeus,* Clement "sees a parallel between the Demiurgos and the Logos-Christ" (ibid: 227). And, while Clement is strong in his exposition of divine transcendence, "when he is speaking of religious experience, he repeatedly uses terms about God which involve inevitably a certain kind of immanence, although he expressly guards against pantheism" (ibid: 228, 229). In Clement's inter-balance of transcendence and immanence, Outler discerns an adherence to Platonic doctrine (ibid: 229).

Clement goes on to build on this Platonic platform by using the thought of Philo, in which "God is transcendent, but is related to the world by a multitude of intermediary powers, the chief of which is the Logos. Clement, like Philo ... emphasizes God's

relatedness to the world, but with a profound difference. This difference ... lies in Clement's conception of Jesus Christ as the incarnation of Reason and Truth and saving power" (ibid: 230). Outler characterises Clement as an 'eclectic' (ibid: 237) whose "greatest ambition was to show the unity of the truth of the Christian faith and that of Greek philosophers" (ibid: 237, 238). As a result, "he is fascinated by the thought that philosophy was the Greek propadeutic to Christianity just as the Torah had been for the Jews. Each, however, was only partially true and the Christian revelation is the completion of the truth" (ibid: 238). Outler concludes of Clement that "in no essential respect does he alter his emphasis upon the primacy of Christian revelation, and this is unfailingly associated with the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son and Logos of God" (ibid.). He "stands as a symbol of that Christian humanism which holds that moral faith and high intellectual emprise are correlative" (ibid.). M. J. Edwards views Clement's treatment of the Logos as falling into three distinct categories, "first (a) as the totality of divine powers, secondly (b) as the cosmogonic principle, the *arkhē*; thirdly (c) as the cosmocratic or hegemonic wisdom of God, now present in the world" (Edwards, 2000: 165). Edwards goes on to write, "At *Excerpta 19* Clement records a claim that Christ as Logos is the image and son of an Invisible who abides unchangeably in the Godhead ... this image took flesh not only at the nativity, but also in a sense at the creation" (ibid: 174). Clement understands the Logos as "God in God" (ibid.). Clement fundamentally identifies "God's eternal Logos with the incarnate Jesus Christ" (ibid: 175).

Prior to Clement, Justin Martyr had argued that "the same Logos that was known by pagan philosophers had now appeared in the form of Jesus of Nazareth" and that "the reason in every human being participates in the universal Logos" (Kärkkäinen, 2003: 56, 57). So, "the divine Logos sowed seeds throughout human history; therefore, Christ is known to some extent by non-Christians" (ibid.). Importantly, "access to salvation in some form – perhaps a not-as-yet-perfect-form – was available through the Logos that was 'sown' in all human cultures and religions ... the seminal word or reason in which all humankind partakes gives access to God even for those who have never heard of Christ" (ibid: 57). Origen, a third-century theologian from Alexandria, "brought Logos Christology to its fullest development" (ibid: 59). Origen, highly trained in Greek philosophy, wrote in his argument against Celsus, "there never was a time when God did not wish to make men live righteous lives but he continually evinced His care for the improvement of the rational animal, by affording him occasion for the exercise of virtue.

For in every generation the wisdom of God, passing into those souls which it ascertains to be holy, converts them into friends and prophets of God" (ibid: 60).

Martin Maw, in his *Visions of India: Fulfilment Theology, the Aryan Race Theory, and the Work of British Missionaries in Victorian India* (1990), writes extensively on Westcott's fulfilment theory, "For Westcott and the missionaries fired by his teaching, Christianity was a creed which found 'an ever growing fulfilment through the services of different races'. Each culture and religion contained its own particular fragment of revelation. Consequently, the Church would only be made complete when these shards had been assembled and compassionately assessed" (Maw, 1990: 11). In Westcott's thought, "Other religions would find their proper spiritual identity in Christianity. India, for instance, would 'discover her future religion, the fulfilment of her sages' predictions and her saints' longings' – in a word, her salvation, her joy and her crown" (ibid: 11, 12). Fulfilment theology was built on the statement of Christ in Matthew 5:17, where, with reference to Jewish tradition itself, Christ claims that he has come "not to destroy, but to fulfil" (ibid: 12). In Westcott's view, the interaction of Christianity with Eastern faiths, in particular, would produce a fertile and mutual cross-cultural enrichment. It would bring about "new forms of piety, new modes of Christian experience … new aspects of doctrine, new interpretations of the Christ" (ibid.). Maw claims that Max Müller's concept of Aryan expansion and their supposed bringing of culture to Europe was bolstered by his belief that the Aryan gods had provided the model for European god figures themselves. This, coupled with his conviction that the 'returning' of Europe to the East, foreshadowed the reconstitution of the ancient Aryan tribe in the fusion of East and West, and presaged a new age of wonders for the world.

According to Maw,

> Müller's ideas represent a racial analogue to the fulfilment theology of Westcott and his disciples. One *weltanschaung* underpinned both schools of thought: a Platonic conception of higher truth as a diffused or latent quality in the world, that might be revealed through the sympathetic interaction of superficially different cultures. The result would be a broader definition of human brotherhood, enshrined in the riches of an expanded Gospel, and in an awareness of the Logos as the ordering principle of life. 'The diversities of men as gathered together and crowned in the Son of Man … [would create] a unity of which every imaginable unity on earth is a phantom or a symbol', wrote Westcott; whilst Müller evidently envisaged a reconciliation akin to that achieved between Stoicism

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and Christianity by the Alexandrian hermeneutists of the second century, when 'the whole world assumed a new aspect ... supported and pervaded by reason or Logos, it was throughout teleological, thought and willed by a rational power ... the One Son of God, the pattern of the whole race of men'. (ibid: 15)

Platonic influence on Westcott had brought about in him a "philosophical acceptance of a universe filled with the echo or shadow of noumenal form" as well as "his belief in that dialectical principle known as *coincidentia oppositorum* – that truth is a paradoxical quantity, more often discernable at the poles of any given argument than in the golden mean between" (ibid: 143). Westcott drew his conception of the Logos from the Johannine Gospel, from the Neoplatonic tradition which merged with Christianity, from Plotinus, Philo and the scholars of the Alexandrian school, from Origen in particular, from the Cambridge Platonists, and especially Benjamin Whichcote, Coleridge, Maurice and Comte (ibid: 152). He was drawn by the universality of the Alexandrians, by the potential of their doctrine for fulfilment. He was empowered by their attempts to reconcile both Christian and Greek thought in the search of a greater truth. He lamented what he saw as the failure of the school to achieve this and the subsequent ascendancy of Augustinianism and its condemnation of other faiths and all that seemed against the letter of scripture (ibid: 153, 154).

To Westcott's establishment of the Cambridge Mission to India, Maw attributes a very definite attempt to "reassert the principles of Alexandrian Christianity, searching for traces of the Logos in distant faiths, and furthermore, through coincidentia oppositorum, to grasp the greater truth behind the Western church by delving into the completely different beliefs of Eastern religion, and producing a synthetic vision wholly beyond the reach of parochial theology. Everything was reconciled and animated by the Logos" (ibid: 159). In Westcott's thought, India was key. If India could be converted to Christ, the way was open for all of Asia (ibid: 162). But, "instead of imposing Western theology on the Orient, missionaries should engage in a dialogue, treating non-Christians as their partners in pursuit of a higher goal" (ibid.).

Fulfilment theology

It will be clear from the above that Westcott emerged as a strong proponent of fulfilment theory. Paul Hedges traces a number of influences on the growth of fulfilment theory in the nineteenth century. The development of the science of comparative religion had contributed to an large increase in awareness of and knowledge about non-Christian religions. Missionary activity had grown hugely, particularly missions to India. British fascination with India explains why fulfilment theology was mainly developed in relation to Hindusim. Müller had identified India as the cradle of world religion. Furthermore, elements of mystery had begun to be reintroduced into religion. It was no longer viewed as simply a moral realm, but also as a place of intellectual challenge (Hedges, 2001: 22–5). Hedges has written a very comprehensive study of fulfilment theology in all of its many aspects and facets. It suffices for this present study to give an overview of these, so as to explain the basic concepts of fulfilment theory.

Hedges makes the point that throughout history, there is a "vast range of people across denominations, and two millennia of Christian tradition, who have been considered as standing within the tradition of fulfilment theology" (ibid: 27). Monier Monier-Williams had set fulfilment theory in the context of evolution, asserting that lower religions are fulfilled by higher ones in an evolutionary process, Christianity being the one form of religion that fulfils the religious instincts of humanity (ibid: 28). Hedges refers to Eric Sharpe as arguing that the missionary J. N. Farquhar viewed Hinduism as being fulfilled by Christianity in a process of replacement. So, fulfilment is equated here with replacement. Furthermore, truths found within Hinduism are fulfilled in a higher form in Christianity, and Christ himself fulfils the quest of Hinduism by providing the answers to the questions it poses (ibid.). Fulfilment theology can also be understood in terms of 'preparationism'. In this view, other faiths are *praeparatio evangelicae*. They contain imperfect glimpses into the truth and underline that God has not allowed himself to be without witness in world history. Some knowledge of him, no matter how imperfect, is to be found in every faith (ibid.). Hedges also discusses a form of fulfilment proposed by Owen Thomas, who espouses 'Development-Fulfilment'. In this approach, the history of religion is understood as a developmental progression. Religion evolves through history into a higher and purer form, with Christianity being regarded as the highest stage. Other faiths are manifestations of lower stages of religious development. Here, the idea of 'preparation' is not so clear-cut, as these religions at their earlier stages do not necessarily

need, in Thomas' definition, the concept of preparation. However, Hedges notes that "it is normative within fulfilment theology for the two to go together" (ibid: 28, 29).

It should be evident from the above that one of the key concepts underlying fulfilment theology is evolution itself. And, of course, evolution was a key concept in itself in nineteenth-century thought (ibid: 31). In exploring the religious application of evolution, Hedges notes the influence of Hegel's theory of *Weitgeist* or 'world spirit', Schleiermacher's development of a hierarchy of religions and the Romantic movement's emphasis on "organic development or unfolding in the history of the human spirit", which is itself founded on "the idea of religions developing from simpler and more primitive to more complex and higher forms" (ibid.). There is also the related idea of the evolution of humanity itself, so that it is not only religion which is changing, but, as the human being changes, religion is being developed to accompany that change and adapt itself to suit the newly evolved humanity (ibid: 32).

The innate religious desire of the human being is fulfilled by religion itself, but Christianity provides the fullest fulfilment of these needs. The 'lower' religions cannot fulfil the totality of the human being's needs, so the 'higher' religion of Christianity must make up for that lack. To some extent then, fulfilment has its roots in Schleiermacherian thought, with religious feeling and dependence needing to be met by religion, but met to their fullest in Christianity (ibid.). Central, however, to the concept of fulfilment, in Hedges' view, is the idea of 'preparation'. The non-Christian religions might be seen as preparations in that "a similarity of doctrine might be held to suggest that they both point to some need in man which has caused this similarity to occur" (ibid: 33). Or, the similarities might "point to the fact that God has been involved in directing the development of the non-Christian religions" (ibid: 33, 34).

It is Logos theology, however, that Hedges highlights as of great importance, with its focus on the seminal word of God not being limited to the Incarnation.

Hedges goes so far as to write,

> fulfilment theology is most characteristically, and also naturally, found in conjunction with Logos theology. Fulfilment theology cannot be seen as a doctrine separated from the rest of a person's

theology. It needs a context to live, breathe and develop naturally. In other words, fulfilment theology needs a congenial atmosphere. This, I will argue, is only provided in the world-view that is concomitant with Logos theology ... not only was nineteenth-century fulfilment theology born in the bosom of Logos theology, but it almost axiomatically went hand in hand with this tradition and was most fully, and naturally, expressed in relation to it. (ibid: 37)

Chapter 6

Commission IV: Christology and Missiology in Missionary Praxis

As has been argued, christological influences had been a central driving force in missiological development. The two disciplines had acted in tandem in the missionary continuum through the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. While developments in christology had impact on almost every area of the wider theological spectrum, each new development had missiological consequences, since the preaching of the person of Christ is crucial to any Christian missiology and any changes in the theology of the doctrine of Christ have ramifications for the nature of the message. Jon Sobrino writes, "Christology offers statements specifically about Christ, not about any object or person whatsoever" (Sobrino, 1978: xxi). This might seem an obvious assertion, but it points out that the doctrines of christology and the person of Christ are inextricably linked. As one changes, so does the other. The evangelism of the Christian churches is heavily dependent on the figure of Jesus Christ. The message is never separated from the one who is thought to have originated it. So, Roch Kereszty can insist "Theology, and in particular, Christology, is not a mere mental construct based on a number of dogmatic definitions ... but intellectual reflection on the reality of the crucified and risen Christ who lives in his Church and, through the Holy Spirit, he himself guides the Church's understanding of his mystery" (Kereszty, 2002: xiii, xiv).

Kereszty's statement that "each new christological development must be measured against the biblical Christology that is its source and norm" (ibid: xv) is echoed by Stanley Samartha when he writes "All christologies at any place and time need to be grounded in the New Testament" (Samartha, 1991: xi). But, in arguing for a theocentric christology, Samartha's method is one good example of an approach in christology where a christological reappraisal, in his case a shift in emphasis from 'christomonism' to theocentric christology, is needed to reframe this Christ of the New Testament. Christomonism, according to Samartha, "does not do full justice to the evidence of the New Testament, nor does it give sufficient emphasis to the Trinitarian dimension of the Christian faith. It tends to minimize the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of others ...

To draw attention to these points is not to minimize the centrality of Jesus Christ in Christian faith, but to put him more clearly into the structure of trinitarian faith" (ibid: 88). Theocentric christology, Samartha claims, "provides more theological space for Christians to live together with neighbors of other faiths" (ibid.). But, the developments within christology are themselves foundational in providing this space, since "New insights contributed by biblical studies and research on the great christological councils of the church (Nicea, A. D. 325, and Chalcedon A. D. 451) help us better understand how God is in Jesus Christ and how Jesus Christ is related to God. Christocentrism without theocentrism leads to idolatry" (ibid.). This christological development, then, has a missiological outcome, since theocentric christology "makes commitment to God in Jesus Christ possible without taking a negative attitude toward neighbors of other faiths" (ibid.) and "makes it possible to recognize the theological significance of other revelations and other experiences of salvation ... Theocentrism allows for an evolving quest for the meaning of Jesus Christ in which neighbors of other faiths can also participate" (ibid: 88, 89).

Commission IV: The Missionary Message in Relation to Non-Christian Religions

Commission IV of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, had as its brief the discussion of 'The missionary message in relation to non-Christian religions'. It defined its own mission in the opening lines of Volume IV of the Conference reports: its aim "has been to study the problems involved in the presentation of Christianity to the minds of the non-Christian peoples" (WMC IV, 1910: 1). Commission IV was the most theological of all the commissions in a gathering in which, as has been discussed, theology was muted. The theology of Commission IV, however, I would argue, was very limited in its influence on the Conference as a whole. Its theological ambit was very narrowly focused, with no wider discussion of the christological implications of the matters under discussion. It has been seen from previous chapters, that the whole of the nineteenth century, and particularly its latter decades, was a period of very intense debate around the person and significance of Christ – indeed, it could also be said, around the *relevance* of Christ. Although I have said that the influence of Commission IV on the Conference as a whole was limited, that commission was easily the most christologically aware of them all. As will be shown, extremely interesting christological themes were to emerge in its discussions, but the parameters of the Conference meant that the christological trends which were surfacing in the deliberations of Commission IV could

not infiltrate and permeate through the rest of the gathering. Commission IV became, I believe, a 'safe place' within which these issues could be aired, but within which they could also be contained.

It must also be remembered that Commission IV had been conceived of in the same spirit as the rest of the Conference, with the same theological boundaries imposed upon it as had been placed on the other commissions. What differed in regards to Commission IV, however, was first of all the calibre of chairman employed to co-ordinate its deliberations, and secondly the direct input into its discussions and preparation by missionaries on the field who had responded to a questionnaire sent out to canvas their opinions and a number of issues pertinent to missionary thought. This questionnaire asked eleven questions. The most relevant questions for the purposes of this thesis are questions five and six. Question five asked, "What attitude should the Christian preacher take toward the religion of the people among whom he labours?" and question six enquired, "What are the elements in the said religion or religions which present points of contact with Christianity and may be regarded as a preparation for it?" (WMC IV, 1910: 2). Question six, in particular, offers the opportunity to explore christological issues in the context of the Logos and question five also gives occasion for reflection on such issues, using the vehicle of 'attitude' or 'empathy' with reference to elements within other faiths. These elements could be understood to have christological implications since 'attitude' could be swayed according to the resonances or parallels a particular religion might have with Christianity. For example, in the context of Hinduism, there is much more of an inclination to discern a *praeparatio evangelica* in this faith (ibid: 249) than there is in Animism (ibid: 219). The view that Hinduism "is a revelation of deep wants of the human spirit" (ibid: 247) has christological ramifications, which arise from a comparison and contrast of Hindu concepts of the world, redemption and union with the Supreme Being with Christian thought on these areas (ibid: 252–4). Remarkably, Commission IV, in its General Conclusions, asks whether "the thought of India" has anything to offer Christianity and whether Indian concepts might be useful for "developing its latent riches" (ibid: 256). This potentiality for development is framed in language which is strongly reminiscent of a Christian theologically conceptual framework, such as redemption, faith, power, and oneness with God (ibid: 256, 257).

Two important points must be made here – and, as has been mentioned previously, Eric Sharpe draws attention to them. It must be remembered, Sharpe cautions, that "the nine volumes of the Conference report, though invaluable as the expression of the mind of the respective commissions, represent bodies of material *after* having undergone a process of co-ordination and systematization" (Sharpe, 1965: 275) and "The questionnaire was sent to a select group of missionaries" (ibid: 277). Sharpe emphasises the fact that Mott had wanted to get soundings from "a comparatively small number of missionary leaders through the world – persons chosen with great care by a representative committee after correspondence with the secretaries of the missionary societies in Great Britain, America and the Continent" (ibid: 277n). Here is, perhaps, some more evidence of the attempts to manage the output and discussions of Edinburgh itself, although it would be fair to also surmise that this was done so that the workload would be manageable. However, Sharpe goes on to assert "Of the sixty-five missionaries working in the Hindu milieu ... eight only were representative of Continental societies, or of Continental origin; eleven were Indians. The remainder were either British or Americans" (ibid.). To reiterate a point made in Chapter 5, the North Americans and the British were generally viewed by Continentals as having an expansionist approach to mission. As Timothy Yates writes, "Americans had cultural and historical reasons for viewing mission in terms of extension and expansion, whether as pioneers in an essentially hostile environment to be subdued, or an inheritors of strands of Calvinism" (Yates, 1994: 11). The Continental missionary strategists, as typified by Gustav Warneck, adopted a more integrationist approach, where mission "has as its aim 'to bring the greatest possible segment of the people into the orbit of the church. This should be done in such a way that the church in every nation conveys the native traits and characteristics and sways the whole ethnic life ... the folk church [is] the school in which mankind [as] ethnic groups is brought to the discipleship of Christ' " (ibid: 36). In his letter to the World Missionary Conference, published in the report of Commission I, Warneck had discussed the importance of defining the gospel and making it intelligible to non-Christians, stressing the vital need to present the gospel in cultural context (WMC I, 1910: 435, 436). In the event, the replies from Anglo-Saxon missionary quarters showed a propensity on the part of many to think along the more integrationist lines of the Continental missiologists than the North American faction.

When Kenneth Cracknell discusses the work and thought of what he terms "missionary theologians", he actually uses the term to refer to missionaries themselves who

contributed towards missionary thought by their 'theologising' within their own situations (Cracknell, 1995: 107). He highlights the fact that "they were fine scholars and subtle thinkers" (ibid.). When he discusses the contributions of those missionary theologians who contributed their theological reflections to Edinburgh 1910, he writes of their debt "to the great Greek teachers of the church as their missionary models, both in terms of a theology of religion which stressed immanence rather than transcendence, and by means of that immanence the doctrine of the indwelling Logos or pre-existent Christ" (ibid: 108). Their contemporary influences, among others, were Westcott and Maurice (ibid.). Cracknell deals chiefly with attitudes towards other religions, but his counsel is equally valid for the study of christological thought, when he writes of the replies sent to the questionnaires that had been distributed that "the main concern is with the beginnings of inter-religious understanding, and with those who began to work out new patterns of Christian theology which might more adequately reflect the activity of God in the faith of other men and women" (ibid: 194). He goes on to interpret the responses to the questionnaire as "represent[ing] the very earliest attempts within the missionary movement this century to specify how Christians might conduct themselves in relation to these other great traditions" (ibid.).

While Commission IV, then, found itself party to the strict parameters set on it by the rationale of the Conference *vis-à-vis* theological discussion and reflection, it enjoyed the unique position among the commissions of having to deal with a topic of which theology was essentially an inevitable by-product. However, as has been seen with reference to the other commissions, there were ways to so modify the theological voice that it could be barely discerned. That this did not happen with Commission IV is testament to the determination of its chairman, Professor David Smith Cairns, and many of the respondents, who themselves set a theological and christological agenda and focus, which could not be ignored. In Commission IV, therefore, the theological voice, though managed and corralled, was nevertheless loud enough to be heard and significant enough to make a difference. The christological debate that emanated from Commission IV demonstrates not merely the importance of christology in missiology itself, but, more than that, it demonstrates that christology was central in itself as a contemporary issue and that the repository of christological thought that had emerged over two centuries, but particularly in the decades preceding Edinburgh 1910, had influenced missionaries and missionary thinkers to a far greater extent than the organisers of Edinburgh were

willing to allow in their preparations and in their setting of parameters. In not providing a platform and a forum for open discussion and consideration of the christological debates that encircled the Conference and the period, the organisers were attempting, or perhaps hoping, to ignore a voice that was just too loud to be ignored. Christology was not just inherent and implicit in their debates, as has been discussed in my treatment of the christological echoes and assumptions of the other commissions, but it was also more overt in Commission IV and central to its area of study and concern.

The christological character of the missionary responses to Commission IV

In this section, I analyse the christological nature of a number of responses to Commission IV's questionnaire. The replies, some two hundred in all (WMC IV, 1910: 3) are described by David Cairns as "contain[ing] material of the highest importance for the student of Church History, of Biblical Interpretation, and of Dogmatics and Apologetics, and we can, further, conceive of no better introduction to the non-Christian religions than is provided by these papers, for the students who are contemplating missionary work abroad" (ibid.). A similar comment from Cairns appeared in 1909, published in a letter which accompanied the despatch of the questionnaire to missionaries. In this letter, Cairns had set forth the aims of the commission. It is of note that, in stressing in this letter that the help of the missionaries would "be of altogether incalculable value", Cairns included a term missing from the quotation above, which appears in the commission report. In the letter, Cairns also mentions that the replies would "almost certainly influence deeply the whole future teaching of Apologetics to missionaries and would be certain to cast a flood of light on almost *every department* of *Theology*, Dogmatics, Church History and Interpretation of Scriptures" (italics mine).[21] The term 'theology' is an interesting inclusion because it is suggestive, in the context of other statements Cairns makes with reference to the importance of the responses of the missionaries for an understanding of the relationship between Christianity and the non-Christian faiths, that he is interested in contributions that explore the theological basis of this relationship. In doing so, he is subtly introducing a definite theological element to the proceedings and, inevitably, a christological element as well. And, to support this view, it is interesting to see that on the very first page of the report, the commission members state that their task is "to enquire into the conflicts of faith in the non-Christian lands, the influence of the

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21. A copy of this letter is to be found in the papers of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, archived at the Henry Martyn Centre, Westminster College, Cambridge.

whole upon the theology of the Church at home, and the suggestions which it offers for the training of missionaries (WMC IV, 1910: 1).

The first part of the closing section deals exclusively with theological issues. The commissioners take full advantage of their remit to expand the theological parameters, to encompass terms, language and imagery that are reminiscent of and resonant with the christological and missiological innovation of the era. So, they refer, in a nod, it would seem, towards Alexandrian thinking, to their belief that "The whole New Testament literature and much also of the patristic literature is dominated by the missionary aim" (ibid: 214). The writers of the New Testament and of the patristic literature "were engaged in the same work as our correspondents ... they too, were in the heart of a great battle between the living forces of Christianity and the death and life forces of the non-Christian religions of their day" (ibid.). As a result, "We have not here to do with a scholastic theology wrought out of general conceptions in the study, but with a living world of spiritual thought which gradually emerged out of the faith of the first disciples under the strain of the conflict with the powers of Judaism and paganism" (ibid: 215). Crucially, "We can see how the whole Apostolic view grew out of the twofold endeavour of those first missionaries of the Church to meet what was deep and true in the other religions, and to guard against the perils which arose from the spell which these earlier religions still cast upon the minds of those who had been delivered from them into the larger life of the Gospel. Thus it was under the pressure of these spiritual labours that the latent riches of the Divine salvation were brought to light" (ibid.). The Apostles had faced an emergency and "new faith is always born out of new emergencies" (ibid.). Now, "the Church is once again facing the emergency" (ibid: 215, 216). Then, in phrases which are meant as a rebuke to the failures of the Church of the past to grasp the missiological nettle, but which can, I would argue, also be read as a prophetic rebuke to the Church of the age of Edinburgh, the commissioners write "The ages which flinched from facing that emergency were necessarily shut off from the full privileges which in the Divine order come from a world task which is a duty, and which is yet utterly beyond the power of the Church in herself to fulfil ... Today we stand in that extremity once more" (ibid: 216).

Furthermore, the commissioners go on to say, the testimonies of those who have been studied in the whole ambit of the report "disclose in all its depth the spiritual needs of

the human soul, just as the Apostolic writings disclose the spiritual needs of the Jew and Greek" (ibid.). In comparing the close parallels between the time of the New Testament writers and the present day in which they were writing, the commissioners underline the "parallel between the all-pervading Hellenism, which conditioned the later years of St. Paul and St. John, and in a still greater degree, the labours and the thought of the Fathers, and the Vedantism which our missionaries are facing today in Poona and Madras and Calcutta. Different as Platonism and Vedantism are in many important respects, they are alike in the deep distinction they draw between the earthly and the spiritual (ibid: 217). This first section ends with a very forceful defence of the role of theology in the missionary endeavour, a statement very much out of keeping with the rest of the Conference's debates and ethos. It strikes a tone and stance that could have transformed the rest of the proceedings and might have enabled the emergence of a much more pluralist approach at a much earlier juncture: "What is needed is a living faith, and a living faith demands a living theology" (ibid: 218). Here, then, was no mere appeal to the static Western and imperialist homage to the status quo, seen in the deliberations of other commissions, but the emphasis on a 'living theology' implies a theology which is also willing to grow and develop. It is pertinent, at this point, therefore, to look at the 'space' given to missionaries and missionary theologians who were embracing this 'living theology' and who were developing an understanding of it which would show a different christological perspective.

John Nichol Farquhar's fulfilment theology

When the extremely detailed and very considered response of J. N. Farquhar (1861–1929) was received by Commission IV, his name would certainly have been very familiar to those who read and digested it. Initially, Farquhar had been in missionary service with the London Missionary Society, joining that organisation in 1890 and then, travelling as a missionary to India in 1891 (Neill, Anderson and Goodwin, 1970: 207). He grew dissatisfied with the missionary methods of the LMS and joined the YMCA in 1902 (ibid.). Robin Boyd explains the impetus that drove Farquhar thus: "Farquhar felt the crucial need of a workable 'apologetic' approach to the university-educated Indian and as a means to that end sought to find a more satisfactory relationship between Christianity and Hinduism than that of mere mutual exclusion ... It was Farquhar's belief that there is an *evolutionary* connection between Hinduism and Christianity, as of lower to higher, so that what is only foreshadowed in Hinduism is fulfilled and perfected in Christianity"

(Boyd, 1975: 89). Boyd notes that Farquhar had stood in a line of missionaries who had dissociated themselves from the exclusivist tendencies of the sending Churches (ibid.). In Boyd's opinion, Farquhar's thought, having been "pushed into the background by Kraemer in 1938" (ibid: 280) has re-emerged in more recent times and has had significant influence "largely through the writings of Roman Catholic authors like Raymond Panikkar and Swami Abhishiktananda (Henry Le Saux), and through the support given to this approach by Vatican II" (ibid.).

Boyd refers to the controversial nature of Farquhar's thought for his time, in particular the theological views expressed by him in his best-known work, *The Crown of Hinduism* (1913). Farquhar was certainly not alone in his sympathy for Hinduism. As has been seen, Max Müller championed the cause of Hinduism and other Indian religions and Boyd mentions three major figures of the day who themselves had "reflected the new attitude of sympathy and openness towards Hinduism" (ibid: 89), these being William Miller, T. E. Slater of Madras and Nehemiah Goreh. Boyd also makes the point that, although Farquhar is generally held as an example of the kind of missionary who had considerable empathy with Hinduism, his "conception of fulfilment is considerably more conservative than one might expect from the title of his book" (ibid: 284). Nevertheless, Farquhar's theology gives an insight into the new way of approaching non-Christian religions that was emerging from the nineteenth century, which involved a re-focus on the relevance and place of Christ.

Paul Hedges, in his major work on the fulfilment theology of Farquhar, argues, with particular reference to Commission IV, that "the main failure of the Edinburgh conference, and the writers of the report [was] an inability to appreciate the good in other religions except in an abstract way. They are very ready to praise the ideals and concepts of other faiths, but there seems an almost total aversion to seeing this in the living faith of the non-Christian religions. Other religions are seen as being destined to pass away" (Hedges, 2001: 247). The emphasis on 'sympathy', is, in Hedges' view, "patronizing" (ibid.). But, "there were also those present, however, who realized that this attitude existed and should be dealt with" (ibid.). Into this category, Hedges places the Bishop of Lahore, George Alfred Lefroy (ibid: 248), who particularly argued for the elimination, on the part of missionaries, of "an air of patronage and condescension" and the establishment of "a genuinely brotherly and happy relation – as between equals – with

their Indian flocks" (ibid.). This very positive aspiration towards Indian Christians and non-Christians is further echoed in the overall treatment given to Hinduism at Edinburgh, with Commission IV stating in its discussion of Hinduism, "no other non-Christian religion approaches this in the gravity or in the depth of its endeavours after God" (WMC IV, 1910: 247). A certain ambivalence, therefore, emerges between openness and exclusivism in much of the deliberations of Commission IV. This tension is not surprising when we take into account the fact that the missionaries involved were from conservative Christian backgrounds and were on the mission field to promote a particular religious viewpoint. Fulfilment theology tends to occupy a mediating position between the two approaches. It affirms Christian supremacy, whilst allowing for a Logos christological perspective. E. C. Dewick writes of the attitude of "the spokesmen of other faiths" towards fulfilment theory, "in spite of its conciliatory tone, its attitude seems to them to savour of patronage and condescension. They realise that its ultimate purpose is unquestionably to destroy, or at least absorb , all other systems of religion; and they regard it as a smooth-spoken but subtle invitation to the 'heathen fly' to walk into the parlour of the 'Christian spider' " (Dewick, 1953: 51).

Hendrik Kraemer was to refer to Farquhar's view in the following terms: "[but] in face of the facts and of theological considerations it is too facile and, although entirely unintentionally, too complacent. It is benevolent superiority intending to be gracious modesty" (Kraemer, 1956: 215). However, just prior to this judgement, Kraemer had also written of Farquhar's theology of fulfilment, "This is in fact a modern version of Justin Martyr" (ibid.). Kraemer, therefore, places Farquhar in the Alexandrian sphere of influence. Eric Sharpe suggests a strongly christological argument where Kraemer objected to Farquhar's theology and his use of the term 'fulfilment', not, Sharpe argues, "because he wished to deny altogether the possibility of some kind of divine revelation having taken place in the non-Christian religions, but because he wished to guard against relativism in respect to the unique revelation in Christ" (Sharpe, 1965: 12). Farquhar was not alone, of course, in his espousal of fulfilment theory. Farquhar "was making use of an idea (and a formula) which had emerged in late nineteenth century Britain, in the work of Max Müller and Monier Monier Williams, and which had been introduced into the Indian missionary debate by T. E. Slater and F. W. Kellet" (ibid: 23). Mariasusai Dhavamony , in his discussion of the Cosmic Christ, writes, "Fulfilment theology teaches that God has left traces of himself and of his salvific plan in the other religious

traditions" (Dhavamony, 2001: 63). This presence may be understood firstly, according to Dhavamony, as meaning that "non-Christian religions all contain the essence of religion to a greater or lesser extent and Christianity realizes the essence of religion more fully than the others" (ibid.). Here, religion is viewed in a phenomenological paradigm, rather than either a philosophical or theological mode (ibid.). Dhavamony's second model of fulfilment theory is that which "holds that Christ fulfilled the law and the prophets of Israel and Christ fulfilled the philosophy of Greece. Often behind the fulfilment theology, there is Logos christology. Namely, the whole of humanity partakes in the Logos through creation; the Cosmic Christ informs all persons and God who is at work in their religions and brings them to perfection through the Logos who is Christ" (ibid: 64, 65).

Farquhar, as will be seen, adopts a phenomenological approach to his theology of religions rather than a Logos-centred one, and he interprets the role of Christ more in functional than ontological terms, but nowhere does he move away from the soteriological centrality of Christ. The whole spectrum of Farquhar's thought is too wide to be tackled in its entirety, so I will confine myself to the most relevant aspects of his thought. Hedges has written much about the formative influences on Farquhar's fulfilment theory, and I have touched a little on these, but I wish here to concentrate on his own influence at Edinburgh; however, I will give some insight into formative factors.

Farquhar's response to Edinburgh was formulated in 1909, but he had enjoyed a reputation before that as a thinker who was exploring the whole notion of fulfilment. Sharpe cautions against viewing *The Crown of Hinduism* in isolation, and asserts that the book can be seen as "an experiment in missionary apologetics" as well as "a statement of the Christian attitude to Hinduism in the context of the missionary situation as it was immediately prior to the outbreak of the first world war" and "one of the sources for the missionary thought of a later period" (Sharpe, 1965: 329). In 1910 itself, and three years before the publication of the book of the same name, Farquhar had published an article, 'The Crown of Hinduism' in the *Contemporary Review* (ibid: 330). With his prior reputation, his written contribution to Edinburgh itself and the aforementioned article, Farquhar was significant enough a figure to merit a mention in the text of the Commission IV report. He is referred to as one who views the Hindu faith as "alike fulfilled and superseded by

Christianity" and it is noted that, with reference to this approach towards Hinduism, "Mr Farquhar of Calcutta may be taken as a typical representative" (WMC IV, 1910: 181).

Farquhar's own spiritual formation had taken place within the Evangelical Union, a branch of Scottish Independent Presbyterianism, and a small denomination that was not influenced by Calvinistic tendencies (Sharpe, 1965: 109–11). The Evangelical Union had been founded out of the rifts which occurred in the Scottish churches as a result of the controversies over John McLeod Campbell and James Morison, both of whom have been dealt with in Chapter 6. The Evangelical Union grew directly out of the controversy centred on Morison, and took as its motto "salvation without distinction or exception" (ibid: 112). From the beginning, therefore, Farquhar was instilled with an open attitude towards those who had not yet heard the gospel. Educated at Oxford, Farquhar was a student there (though not of theology) at the same time that Max Müller and Monier-Williams were both exploring the relationship of non-Christian faiths to Christianity (ibid: 122). Farquhar had a mixed opinion of Max Müller, but Sharpe attributes possibly more influence to the work of Monier-Williams, who was himself formulating his own conception of fulfilment theory (ibid: 126). Monier-Williams' insistence, as distinct from that of Max Müller, on the supremacy of Christianity and its sole validity, is, in Sharpe's opinion, some evidence of direct influence, since this is the approach also taken by Farquhar (ibid: 126).

However, it is the figure of Andrew Fairbairn (1838–1912), himself a minister of the Evangelical Union, that Sharpe believes exercised the greatest influence on Farquhar. This, Sharpe believes, he did in three distinct areas. Firstly, in the field of biblical criticism, secondly in christology, and thirdly in the study of Comparative Religion (ibid: 127, 128). Biblical criticism had been a focus of one of the questions from Commission IV, but Farquhar writes little of import about it; however, in response to question ten – which asked "Has your experience in missionary labour altered either in form or substance your impression as to what constitute the most important and vital elements in the Christian Gospel?" – Farquhar gives some personal insight into his own spiritual formation,

Under the influence of modern ideas, I lost my childish belief in Christianity, while I was still young, and it is only to faith in the deeper things that I fought my way during undergraduate days. I read

Honour, Moderations and Litterae Humaniores at Oxford, but had no theological training before I went out to India. Thus, I held no elaborate creed, when I began my work, but was still in the process of forming my own body of beliefs. I saw clearly in a general way the great superiority of Christian theology to every other system, and I held to Christ the Son of God crucified for us, but I had no defined theological ideas ... My work as a missionary has all along been coupled with a little study of the religions of the world as well as of Hinduism; and thus experience and study influenced me together. (Farquhar, 1910: 39, 40)[22]

In a sentence indicative of his openness towards those of other faiths, he writes with regards to admission to baptism, "We ought not to exclude any man, merely because he cannot yet accept a number of points in our scheme of Christian doctrine" (ibid: 43). In assessing Fairbairn's formative influence on Farquhar's christology, Sharpe notes that Fairbairn himself placed a "distinctive emphasis" on the christological, with particular interest in the Jesus of history. Coupled with this stress on the historical method went an acceptance of evolution as a model for understanding the work of God in the cosmos (Sharpe, 1965: 129). Fairbairn had also had a long standing interest in comparative religion, and Sharpe posits a possible influence on Farquhar in this quarter, but there is no firm evidence for it (ibid.).

What Sharpe does highlight is, that irrespective of direct influence from Fairbairn, Farquhar's intellectual development took place in a milieu when controversies and discussions on christological, biblical and comparative religious themes were at their height and "were in some measure the common property of the age" (ibid: 130). Harold Netland gives some flavour of the tendencies of the age in missiological and christological circles when he writes, "From roughly 1840 onward, Protestant missions became increasingly embroiled in controversy over the theology of religions, culminating in the bitter controversies of the 1920s and 1930s. The disputes were due to various factors, including greater openness to soteriological universalism and rejection of traditional teaching on hell" (Netland, 2001: 32).

In his response to Edinburgh 1910, Farquhar explains "nearly all my experience has been among educated Bengali Hindus all over India, and with Buddhists in all the chief

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22. A copy of Farquhar's response to the Edinburgh questionnaire can be found at the Henry Martyn Centre, Westminster College, Cambridge. In the numbering sequence used by Commission IV to catalogue its responses, his is response no. 154. In the Henry Martyn Centre's own catalogue, it is listed as ECM 1/34.

Buddhist lands ... I have had very little touch indeed with the common people of India, except in occasional visits to country stations in Bengal. I speak Bengali; so that I am not cut off from them linguistically" (Farquhar, 1910: 1). In *The Crown of Hinduism*, he writes, "Educated Hindus regard the missionary propaganda as an unjustifiable attack on the national genius and spirit" (Farquhar, 1920: 33) and "Even if a missionary were unwise enough to wish to attack Hinduism with hard words, he would not dare do it; for no educated audience would stand it" (ibid: 35). The emphasis here on the term 'educated' is quite important for assessing the contribution of J. N. Farquhar, and I will return to it, but Sharpe also points out this emphasis and remarks that, amongst the educated classes, the institution of Christian higher education had "created an intellectual aristocracy, at least partly Westernized (though frequently critical of the West), and often at least partly disassociated from its traditional background" (Sharpe, 1965: 331, 332). The Hinduism that Farquhar interacts with, then, is not the Hinduism of the masses, but rather the Hinduism of those whose thought had been influenced by Western impact, an impact which may have modified their beliefs somewhat. It was a classical Hinduism, espoused by those who had enjoyed the fruits of a Western education (ibid: 332, 333). It was a Hinduism that was espoused by those who were most open to its reform, and this reformation could lead not to a revived Hinduism, but to its replacement by Christianity (ibid.).

So, the authors of the Commission IV report could write, "While thus both Indian theism and philosophy furnish fruitful points of contact with, and preparation for Christianity, there are others who take the view that they are both alike fulfilled and superseded by Christianity. Of these, Mr Farquhar of Calcutta may be taken as a typical representative" (WMC IV, 1910: 181). The Report goes on to explain that Farquhar holds the idea that the history of Indian theological reform has contained in its development one fatal flaw, and this defect lies in the fact that "Hinduism has never succeeded in conceiving of the Universal Personality which is the central conception of Christian theism, and which provides the one possible synthesis and harmony of the age-long divisions of Hindu thought and religion" (ibid.). Attributing to Farquhar the view that Indian theism and the Vedanta provide several points of contact with Christianity, the Report continues "Christianity is the norm and synthesis of all these severed but living elements in Indian religion" (ibid.). As a result, "The true but incomplete concept

of the Upanishads and the long search of the theists both find their completion in the God of Christianity" (ibid: 182).

The Report itself was certainly skewed towards missionaries who had worked in an Indian context, and mission theologies and approaches which had been worked out in response to these contexts. In the list of correspondents to the commission, published at the beginning of the report, 65 out of the 187 respondents had responded out of Hindu contexts (WMC IV, 1910, xvii–xx). And this list was a notable one, consisting of several figures who were to have considerable impact in the field of Hindu–Christian dialogue. The report of Commission IV, and indeed the tenor of the whole Conference, was to adopt a theology of religions that was largely expressed in fulfilment terms. "Most of the missionaries responded to the commissioners in terms of *fulfilment*, and indeed Edinburgh 1910 was the moment of apotheosis of this idea" (Cracknell, 1995: 221). Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen comments, "This is quite significant in light of the fact that the Edinburgh Conference, of course, was still dominated by the idea of absoluteness and superiority over other religions" (Kärkkäinen, 2003: 105). But, while "the fulfilment motif, in various forms, was to become a dominant theme in twentieth-century theologies of religions" (Netland, 2001: 35), it, in a sense, fell between two stools in its christological application. Netland explains, "Farquhar's views were controversial and he was criticized both by theological conservatives for being too accommodating of Hinduism and by liberals for still insisting upon the finality of Jesus Christ and Christianity" (ibid.). This insistence is taken up in the report of Commission IV, which underlines the importance of "the unanimous expression of the absoluteness of the Christian revelation", even where missionaries are "keenly alive to the necessity of doing the fullest justice to the religions of India" (WMC IV, 1910: 176). The supreme position of Christianity must always be protected, as it "absolutely supersedes Hinduism by absolutely fulfilling all which is noblest in the ancient faiths" (ibid.).

But, of course, the key issue here is still a christological one, and so a theological one. Even in a situation where other religions are seen as teleological, in that they are moving towards fulfilment in Christianity, that teleology still has as its driving force the internal 'seed' that provides the basis for its teleology, and that seed, as we have seen, is the Logos Spermatikos, the seed of the Logos, which brings us once again to Logos christology. I turn now to examine Farquhar's christology itself, as expressed in *The*

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Crown of Hinduism, and its relationship to the Logos. Kenneth Cracknell refers to "Logos patterns of thinking" (Cracknell, 1995: 218) to describe tendencies and approaches that demonstrate evidence of the use of Logos christology, and I will utilise this idea in examining not only the christology of Farquhar himself, but also the christological approaches of other thinkers who contributed to Edinburgh 1910. In doing so, I will show that not only was Edinburgh 1910 able to look back on a vast inheritance of christological debate, as has been discussed in previous chapters, but it was itself the receptacle and reservoir of a very significant amount of christological thinking, which was unable to be sifted, evaluated and harnessed due to the strictures placed on it.

A great wealth of theological and christological deliberation was gathered, but it was not directed in such a way that it could provide the missionary movement with a platform from which it could make sense of the christological maelstroms and develop a functional christology, or even functional christologies, that would prepare it for a very new religious paradigm. Its blind acceptance of fulfilment and its failure to more fully understand the implications of Logos christology, its inability to allow a fuller working out of its relevance to the relationship between Christianity and non-Christian faiths, led inexorably to perpetuate a form of Christian exclusivism, albeit by the inclusivist back door. Fulfilment theology was, in fact, Christian hegemony by stealth. Christology at Edinburgh never really grew into the issue it could have been, and, as a result, when the missionary movement moved forward, christological underpinnings were lacking and the movement was unprepared for the events of 1928 and 1938.

The Crown of Hinduism

Evolutionary thought, along with Logos theology, is essential to the concept of fulfilment. T. E. Slater (1840–1912), who also contributed to Edinburgh, was one of the foundational figures in fulfilment. Consonant with his belief in Alexandrian christology, Slater viewed humanity as evolving upwards, under the influence of a divine teleology (Maw, 1990: 57). He searched the Hindu scriptures for evidence of preparation for the reception of the gospel (ibid.). Before Slater, K. M. Banerjea (1813–1885) had developed an innovative theology that linked Aryanism and Hinduism in a common bond of origin, within which Banerjea discerned a number of parallels between Vedic and Biblical

theology (ibid: 46, 47).[23] "To him, it proved the object of Vedic worship, unnamed and unsuspected by its adherents, had been Christ ... The Vedas shed a peculiar light upon that dispensation of Providence which brought Eastern sages to worship Christ long before the Westerns had ever heard of Him" (ibid: 47). In Banerjea's thought, "the distant ancestors of Brahmin and bishop had shared the same society and the same rituals. The Aryan dispersion had carried this framework into East and West" (ibid.). The result of this dispersion was that the faith underwent corruption in India, but "in the West, however, it had been exalted and its promise fulfilled by the intercession of Christ. In bringing this revelation to India, the Church was not seeking to destroy Hinduism, but to purify it and to consummate its holiest ambitions" (ibid: 48).

With regards to Slater, Maw claims "The nub of his theology was the principle of evolution and its relationship to the beneficence of God" (ibid: 52). Slater built on the work of Banerjea, where he agreed with Banerjea that, with reference to truth, "every race and religion had some access to it" (ibid: 56). The role of Christianity was to lift humankind up towards God. It was "the ceiling of mortal awareness" (ibid.). As a result, argues Maw, in Slater's thought, evolutionary thought "becomes a function of the godhead itself" (ibid.). Slater's theology imposes a teleology in which, using the evolutionary model, humankind is being directed by God towards the highest place, through a series of intermediary stages (ibid.). So, no religious approach could be wholly false, and no religion could have a monopoly on truth (ibid 57). But crucially, Christianity, as a consequence of being a progressive religion, in contrast to non-Christian faiths, which he regarded as either regressive or stagnant, embodied the truth in its fullest sense, and, in true evolutionary style, Slater located truth within the process of evolution itself, so that the supremacy of Christianity had come about by a variation on the notion of 'the survival of the fittest' (ibid.). What distinguished Christianity from other faiths was a unique revelation which had been given to it; but this revelation had, through the principle of the Logos, gained momentum through the fusion of Aryan and Semitic conceptions and, as a result, had focused on the person of Christ and had then flourished in the Western context, while India, devoid of the Incarnation, had experienced spiritual decay (ibid: 63). The Aryan, not having related itself to the Semitic, instead became submerged in nature and took on a totemistic hue (ibid.).

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23. See also Sharpe, 1965: 91 ff.

Again, like Farquhar, Slater had dealt primarily with educated Indians and enjoyed good relations with them (Sharpe, 1965: 100). He held, however, that the non-Christian religions, while they had "served their purpose" (ibid: 102) and had been completed by the revelation of Christ, were nevertheless full of "presentiments of the truth" (ibid.). "In Slater", writes Sharpe, "we find an early point of contact between the attitudes developing out of the 'science of religion' and the Evangelical missionary enterprise in India" (ibid: 104). Sharpe believes that Slater had some influence on Farquhar's ideas, but is "unable to gauge quite how extensive that influence might be" (ibid.). Farquhar had also been influenced by the work of Frederick William Kellet (1862–1904), who had served on the staff of Madras Christian College. Like Banerjea, he saw in Vedantic theology the foreshadowing of Jesus, including various *typoi* of Jesus in the figures of some of the Vedic gods. Banerjea had drawn parallels between Prajāpati, the Lord or supporter of the Creation, and the person of Christ (Boyd, 1975: 281, 282).

Slater had envisaged Christianity as a powerful instrument of social evolution (Maw, 1990: 56). Farquhar too believes that "social evolution all over the world is steadily tending in the direction of these Christian ideals" (Farquhar, 1920: 202). By this, Farquhar is referring to a process by which society evolves to a higher level of spirituality and to a higher supernatural level. But this evolution is no mere mechanical process, but relies on an individual choice (ibid: 27, 28). Therefore, it can be frustrated. But, in making the choice, the individual does not evolve into, or develop, into a higher state, but rather replaces one state with another. As Sharpe points out, to Farquhar, fulfilment actually has more to do with replacement (Sharpe, 1965: 336). "So, when a polytheist, coming in contact with Christianity, realizes the folly of idolatry, and feels that the cross and love of Christ are just what he needs for the transformation of his sin-stained soul and life; if he fail to confess Christ publicly; if he shrink back from acting upon this revelation of religious truth in his inner life ... if he continue to bow down to idols, his old faith ... can never be for him a door into fellowship with God again; for he has turned his back upon the highest, and has made the great refusal" (Farquhar, 1920: 28). But Farquhar goes further in his notion of fulfilment. In his view, idolatry itself points towards a set of human needs. Since these are not satisfied by the truth, they look elsewhere for satisfaction, and, without Christian witness, they veer towards the idolatrous. That which replaces idolatry must be powerful enough to act as a replacement for what has been

abandoned. "We must find a spiritual force as vivid and as real as idolatry, and as fully charged with religious emotion, a spiritual dynamic which will render idols obsolete by appealing as successfully as they do, and yet in a healthy spiritual fashion, to the religious imagination and feeling" (ibid: 342, 343). This replacement Farquhar envisaged to be Christ.

"In this volume", writes Farquhar in his introduction to *The Crown of Hinduism*, "in setting forth Christianity as the Crown of Hinduism, we shall restrict ourselves to Christ Himself" (ibid: 64). Sharpe rightly queries "the vexed question of the nature of Farquhar's Christian faith and Christian theology" (Sharpe, 1965: 339). This Sharpe does because of a curious ambiguity in Farquhar's declared intention. "Christ, he claimed, was the satisfaction of the spiritual hunger of the idolater; but he also stated that his book was written in order to show 'that *Christianity* is the Crown of Hinduism'. What then was the relationship between Christ and Christianity; and how could Christianity be set forth as the fulfilment of something so foreign as Hinduism?" (ibid.). Farquhar was not a dogmatic theologian, so his theology in *The Crown of Hinduism* is that of "the missionary apologist" (ibid: 340).

He begins with the image of the Fatherhood of God, but it is a moral fatherhood and at variance with Indian moral theology, which Farquhar views as something that exists apart from God. God is therefore essentially an ethical being, and this ethical nature is manifested in Jesus (ibid: 342). It is the notion of the Kingdom of God, however, that Sharpe identifies as quite a significant underlying theme in Farquhar's work in spite of the lack of overt reference to it. "There can be no doubt that Farquhar regarded the Kingdom of God as the ultimate goal of 'the social evolution' on which so much of his argument is based" (ibid: 343). It is this Kingdom that would be the basis of the new India (ibid.). Religion and social issues were incapable of being separated (ibid.). Christ himself is regarded as the ethical example, but not an example who is far removed from humanity. God's ethical nature "receives concrete expression in the character of Jesus, who, being the revelation of the Father, the express image of the righteous God, is also the example for men" (Farquhar, 1920: 437).

Sharpe refers to Farquhar's series of lectures delivered in 1913, when he was working on the *Crown*, where he presented Jesus as "a social reformer and servant, a man, teaching

and healing the soul ... Christ the working man, Christ the patriot, Christ the hero-saint ... and Christ the teacher and healer" (Sharpe: 1965, 344). In an important statement, Farquhar writes, "Christ is the head of the whole Church, not of any one denomination. Christ is human, not Western. Far less is He English, Scottish, American or German" (Farquhar, 1920: 58). He is "the universal religious teacher" (ibid: 60). In Farquhar's christology, there is a strong emphasis on the humanity of Christ, on his moral teaching and on his example (Sharpe, 1965: 344). It has already been seen that Farquhar sees the human being as able to make the choice for Christ. The human being has the freedom to accept or to reject him (Farquhar, 1920: 28). The basis for this is that humanity is made in God's image and "the spirit of man is a finite copy of the infinite spirit" (ibid: 120). Furthermore, the spiritual nature of humankind "though finite and weak, is built on the same lines as the nature of God Himself" (ibid.). And, "having created man in His own image with a view to sonship, God loves every human being with the tender love of a father" (ibid.). Indeed, "every man, woman, and child has the peerless dignity of a child of the Supreme" (ibid.). In Farquhar's christology, Christ is open to all and identifies closely with humanity. He is concerned with moral life, with ethical living and with the establishment of the Kingdom, and that Kingdom is not tied to Western values or Western imperialist notions of what might constitute the outworking or manifestation of that Kingdom. "However any single country might be to Christ, it could not interpret Him fully. He is human; and the riches that are in Him can be set forth only by the united efforts of the whole human family" (ibid: 63). Farquhar looks to the dawning of a new age. "We see Jesus crowned with many crowns; but we do not yet see all things put under Him. But in this new age on which we have entered His Kingdom will continue to extend rapidly ... Then will the wonderful religious genius of India reveal its power anew in its interpretation of Christ" (ibid: 63, 64).

In the *Crown* itself, Farquhar refers to Edinburgh 1910, pointing out "In many fields there is a divergence of opinion as to the attitude which the Christian ought to adopt to the non-Christian religions. In India there is a party, small or large, who distinctly disapprove of the attitude adopted towards Hinduism by the commission of the Edinburgh Conference which dealt with the Missionary Message" (ibid: 16). In each church, Farquhar claims, the group that supports mission "is more convinced and more active than ever" (ibid: 17) However, he also refers to those "who frankly say that Missions are unnecessary" and "those who demand that there shall be no more attempts

to win converts, at least from the great religions" (ibid.). Farquhar's approach remained consistently one of sympathy, but, as Paul Hedges asserts, he had a "fundamental belief in the necessity of using the methods of the science of comparative religion" (Hedges, 2001: 278). Although he was not trained as a theologian, his work on fulfilment was more thorough in its scholarship, according to Hedges, than Slater's; and, in contrast to Monier-Williams and Müller, fulfilment was a central theme in his work rather than a "divergence" (ibid: 279). Viewing Farquhar's work in the context of changing attitudes to world religions, *The Crown of Hinduism* could, Hedges argues, be seen as "the 'crown' of Protestant liberal missionary thought" (ibid: 284). In line with other followers of Logos christology, Farquhar writes approvingly of the thought of Clement of Alexandria, repeating Clement's words from the *Stromateis*: "Philosophy tutored the Greeks for Christ as the Law did the Hebrews" (Farquhar, 1920: 53) adding "Thus it will be with India. Missionaries do not 'wish to destroy' Hindu 'society, history and civilisation', as Prof. Har Dyal imagines they do ... Christ comes, not to steal, and kill and destroy, but to give life and to give it abundantly" (ibid: 53, 54). His biblical basis is not only the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:17, "I come not to destroy but to fulfil" (ibid: 53), but also several other scriptures, which he strings together to form his argument. To quote just two of them, from John 1:9 and Acts 14:7, "We hold Him [Jesus] to be 'the light which lighteth every man;' and we believe that even in savage minds God left himself not without witness" (ibid: 27).

Returning to Farquhar's interaction with comparative religion, he was particularly interested in the application of the historical critical method, exercising a strong belief in evolution as a theological model, the efficacy of Western knowledge and of scientific method in general, and, of course, progress. These approaches, all cultural and societal features of the Victorian and early Edwardian world-view, were progressively "bringing everything with which they come into contact under the sway of their own overarching paradigm" (Hedges, 2001: 287). In his book *Faith meets Faith* (1977), Eric Sharpe, writing of Evangelical reactions to Farquhar, writes, "On the Evangelical wing ... were those who were disturbed less by the thought of reading the *Gītā* through Christian spectacles than by the thought of the alliance which Farquhar was proposing between Christian and evolutionary ways of thinking ... It was therefore understandable that Evangelicals of a certain cast of mind should suspect the whole of the 'fulfilment' package (Sharpe, 1977: 37). But this concept was central to Farquhar's thought and he expresses his view of

religious development in terms which relate to an evolution from 'lower' to 'higher'. "The ladder from earth to heaven is there for the lowest savage as well as for Jacob and the modern man" (Farquhar, 1920: 27). Of the great religions, he says, " We gladly recognize that, in them, many saints have been trained ... and multitudes of men and women have found God" (ibid: 28) and "We also recognize that in each of these religions men and women are still being trained in goodness and lifted nearer God" (ibid.). Elsewhere, he writes of the acknowledgement by Jesus that the faith of Israel was from God, "This was possible because He knew that God's method of revelation was not the presentation, once for all, of a complete system of truth expressed in a book from all eternity, but a gradual and historical process" (ibid: 51). But, again, it is important to be reminded that in Farquhar's thought, Hinduism is fundamentally and essentially being replaced, not fulfilled, in the purest sense of the word, by Christianity. "Hinduism is being disintegrated. This is the great fact which has to be realized. The ancient religion of India is breaking up" (ibid: 42). Sharpe writes, "Farquhar held that religion was of value to a people only so long as it was the highest they knew" (Sharpe, 1965: 335).

There is a certain tension in Farquhar's work as to whether it is Christ who is the fulfiller or Christianity itself, stemming mainly from his statement at the beginning of the *Crown* where he claims he is "setting forth Christianity as the Crown of Hinduism" (Farquhar, 1920: 64). However, he deals with this just prior to the above statement, when he writes,

> When we say that Christianity is the Crown of Hinduism, we do not mean Christianity as it is lived in any nation, nor Christianity as it is defined or elaborated in detail in the creed, preaching ritual, liturgy, and discipline of any single church, but Christianity as it springs living and created from Christ Himself. (ibid: 58)

Hedges notes that Farquhar tended to regard himself as a liberal evangelical (Hedges, 2001: 332):

> Certainly Farquhar's faith had much in common with the conservative evangelicals of his day, but he was liberal in that he held that those of other faiths could attain to salvation by following the highest they knew, which would be effective for them unless they had come into contact with a higher ideal. However, this belief is not based upon an acceptance of Hinduism as a religion capable of salvific action in itself, or of the Hindu's own direct knowledge of God; to Farquhar Hinduism

had no such power, and the Hindu no direct knowledge of God. These could only come about from faith in Jesus, not, we may note, in specific dogmas. (ibid.)

Hedges goes on to write:

> Yet while he recognized the reality of the non-Christian's religious yearnings, there is still a Barthian-style radical distinction between true and false religion. Man is still made in God's image, and so 'there is that in man which demands a Revelation – there is *not* that in him which makes the Revelation.' Only with Christ do we have spiritual religion, which to Farquhar marks this distinction, for before Jesus came, he says, no one had direct access to the Father. Yet Farquhar is ready to concede that Hinduism is a 'really living religion' which might seem to blur this dividing line, but his definition of religion is if, 'Men have believed in it and lived by it.' It is not that it provides a direct communion with the divine. (ibid: 333)

While he continued to be Evangelical in his thinking, Farquhar saw no purpose to be served in the mere iconoclastic destruction of Hinduism by the Christian missionary (Sharpe, 1977: 27). Sympathy was vital; otherwise there could be no communication (ibid: 28). Scholarly accuracy as to Hindu beliefs was crucial (ibid.). In an assessment of the merits or otherwise of fulfilment theology, Sharpe questions the evolutionary model employed in fulfilment theory. It implied a unity within Hinduism, he argues, which never actually existed (ibid: 29). "What, then, might the expression 'the fulfilment of *Hinduism* mean?" And, if Christ fulfils, or satisfies, "the needs and quests and longings of the individual Hindu", which precise needs and longings are going to be fulfilled, since every individual Hindu might be striving for a different goal? (ibid: 30). Furthermore, the Hindu, having been "provided with a scholarly presentation of various aspects of the Hindu tradition" then had to face the somewhat condescending prospect of being told "at the end that that tradition is either in error or in an incomplete state" (ibid: 31).

At Edinburgh itself, one of the most critical voices against fulfilment was that of A. G. Hogg of Madras Christian College. Hogg's *Karma and Redemption* (1909) had been distributed by Professor David Cairns, the Chairman of Commission IV, to every member of his commission and is referred to in the Commission IV report (WMC IV, 1910: 184). Here, Hogg discussed the "rival conceptions of *karma* and redemption from his own distinctive philosophical and theological standpoint" (Sharpe, 1965: 285). Hogg draws a clear distinction between faith and belief. Faith is "basically trust in God", while belief is the intellectual expression or articulation of that faith. Belief is subject to change,

and, indeed, if it does not change, religion may degrade from a faith into superstition, "which can nourish no living trust in God" (Hogg, 1970: xxi). The conflict between Christian and Hindu thought exists on the level of belief, though this can easily be confused with the realm of faith (ibid: xx). Sharpe explains Hogg's view, "What is necessary is a presentation of Christianity *vis-à-vis* Hinduism in which beliefs are subordinated to faith, and in which the differences of faith, which undoubtedly exist, are to be summed up, not in terms of conflicting beliefs, but 'in one pre-eminent contrast of principle' – such as that between the Hindu idea of *karma* and the Christian idea of redemption" (Sharpe, 1965: 286). Farquhar had been strongly against the idea of contrast, in seeking to understand other faiths. In Hogg's view, "Christianity as a *doctrinal system* consists of an answer, or a series of answers, to problems 'which cannot be keenly felt save by those who have admitted the Christian attitude to life'. To present such Christian ideas as sin, grace, forgiveness and redemption as the satisfaction of the spiritual hunger of those whose attitude is one of longing for release from the bonds of the *karma* system is of course possible" (ibid: 288). However, Sharpe goes on to quote Hogg himself, "the interpretation is a forced one, a compromise of incompatible tendencies of thought and feeling which is unlikely to commend itself to such as approach Christianity from the outside" (ibid.). As a doctrinal system, Christianity is viewed by Hogg, of course, as a system of beliefs.

In his response to Edinburgh 1910, Hogg writes:

> Let the missionary, it is said, present Christianity as the fulfilment of Hinduism. This formula has the advantage of permitting Hindu religion to be regarded not as seeking only but as partial finding; yet beyond this it has little practical helpfulness. Outside of the realm of vague abstraction, what does it mean? Christian doctrines are not the fulfilment of Hindu doctrines, nor Christian rites of Hindu rites. Christian ideals of practice do not uniformly commend themselves to Hindus as better than their own, and if it be alleged that the Christian's experience of Christian religious fruition is a deeper satisfaction of his religious yearning than the Hindu finds in his own experience of Hindu religious fruition, the assertion is one incapable of proof or disproof. (Hogg, 1910: 13)[24]

> Christianity is the solution of a religious problem which the typical Hindu does not feel but which, under favourable conditions, he can be made to feel. (ibid: 14)

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24. Hogg's response is catalogued as response no. 176.

If this be the real relationship of Christianity to Hinduism, to call it one of fulfilment may be, indeed, permissible but the description obscures the fact that it fulfils by, at least partially, destroying. (ibid: 15)

In Robin Boyd's opinion, Hogg " had a much more acute theological understanding than Farquhar" (Boyd, 1975: 284) and, while Boyd admits that at first Hogg's attitude towards Hinduism appears to be a more negative one than that of Farquhar, he believes that Hogg is, in fact, thinking quite profoundly (ibid: 285). Instead of looking for points of contact and similarity between the two faiths, Hogg tries to identify points where they are most in conflict and opposition, and then attempts "to formulate Christian doctrine in a way which speaks clearly to the actual need of our Hindu partners in dialogue" (ibid.). Rather than viewing Hindu doctrines in terms of which Christian counterpart might prove to be its fulfilment, Hogg asks what need of the human spirit that Hindu doctrine seeks to answer, and then presents "the corresponding Christian doctrine" (ibid.). While it may appear that Hogg is more critical of Hinduism than Farquhar, Boyd claims that Hogg shared Farquhar's "sympathetic appreciation of the depth and genuineness of Hindu religious experience" (ibid.). Hedges believes that "Hogg was moving further head of Farquhar in terms of the development of an indigenous Indian Christian theology, in that he was seeking to redefine Christianity in human terms" (Hedges, 2001: 338).

Fulfilment theology quickly became the dominant model within the missionary movement. "The Edinburgh Conference tended to accept the position of Farquhar without particularly close examination and the idea of fulfilment continued to dominate Protestant missionary debate until the Tambaram Conference of 1938" (Sharpe, 1971: 53). Many contributors to Edinburgh expressed ideas couched in fulfilment terms.[25] In Maw's words, speaking generally, not just confined to Edinburgh 1910: "The older Evangelical approach, confining truth to Christian culture, still had its supporters; but they were now in a minority. Most rejected this narrow conception of grace as outmoded. Against it, they set Christ as the 'realised ideal' of Hinduism" (Maw, 1990: 325). Christ as fulfiller, then, is a dominant christological model. T. E. Slater had very much been a leading figure in the development of the fulfilment model, as has been discussed. In 1876, in a course of lectures entitled *God Revealed*, Slater had spoken of

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25. Martin Maw has attempted a breakdown of the figures of those who either express support for, oppose or are neutral on the issue of fulfilment (Maw, 1990: 391–3).

presenting Christianity "not as a voice sounding the knell of doom to non-Christian nations but in the firm persuasion that all are *by nature* Christians" (Sharpe, 1965: 98).

In his reply to Edinburgh 1910, Slater expands on the theological basis of his thought. His thought is very much Christ-centred, rather than imbued with any kind of belief in the Church system. He laments the weakness of the Christianity of the West and, quoting from a Vedantic publication, the fact that, to the Indian mind, it "does not inculcate renunciation and that its advocates do not practice [*sic*] love to all, nor show self-control" (Slater, 1910: 20).[26] The title of the article in the Vedantic publication was entitled 'Why a Hindu accepts Christ and rejects Christianity' (ibid.). "We should", he writes, "reverently study the way in which other races have tried to worship God" (ibid: 49). "No one can understand his own religion properly who knows nothing of other faiths" (ibid: 51). He uses Logos christology to make his point, "In the second century, the Person of Christ exercised a deep influence on the Oriental mind. He was recognised as the Divine Word – the Logos of the Infinite – Who speaks in Nature and in the heart of man, and Who reveals in sacrifice the very heart of God" (ibid: 74). Furthermore, "the Hindu mind, when renewed by the Spirit of Christ, will revel in the wealth of philosophic truth that underlies the Christian faith, and that is opened out especially in the Incarnation; and will transmit to the theology of Christendom something of its idealistic and mystic passion and subtle thought" (ibid: 75). He goes on to speak of the mind, particularly the Indian mind, in the context in which he is writing, which will discern Christ "not so much objectively and historically, as inwardly and spiritually, the Revealer of God, and the inseparable and inmost Life of the soul" (ibid: 75, 76). Most importantly, Slater writes of the pre-existence of Christ "in the bosom of the Eternal" (ibid.). This seeking mind "will contemplate Him as the first born of all creation; as the implanted or 'Spermatic Word' in all men; as the 'Light Spiritual' of the world; as the 'Reconciler of all things unto Himself' ... and by the union of the Eternal Logos with the highest creation in Jesus of Nazareth, the circle of Being made complete" (ibid: 76).

The extent to which Farquhar incorporated Logos theology into his own model of fulfilment is questioned by Hedges, who believes that rather than use the concept as an interpretative model, Farquhar preferred to view the religions of the world as human

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26. Slater's response is no. 229, catalogued at the Henry Martyn Centre, Cambridge, as ECM1/119.

creations, responding to a human need (Hedges, 2002: 301). Farquhar does write, "The use John makes of the Logos is also most significant ... he was clearly very conscious of the hold which the thought had on the cultivated Greek mind" (Farquhar, 1910: 19), but does not develop his thinking here. Nevertheless, he does use the term in the context of Jesus fulfilling Jewish prophecy and a discussion of evidence of preparationism in Judaism as found in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ibid: 18). However, earlier in his paper, Farquhar writes, "while all religions are human, there is only one which satisfies all the religious instincts and yet can be held by modern thinking man" (ibid: 13). He goes on to write, "But, if all religions are human, and yet men can in the long run hold only Christianity, clearly it must be in some sense the climax of the religious development of the world, the end and culmination of all religions" (ibid: 13, 14). Referring to all religions, not just Hinduism, he claims that Christianity "is the fulfilment and crown of each" (ibid: 14). Hedges sees it as an unresolved issue in Farquhar's thought that he can argue that religions have a human origin, yet, apparently then denying divine inspiration in the non-Christian religions, can still hold his theory of the evolution of religions (Hedges, 2001: 301).[27] Hedges has elsewhere made the point that Logos theology and fulfilment go hand in hand (ibid: 37) and he believes that Farquhar's "expression of it fails precisely because he fails to place it in the context of Logos theology" (ibid.). However, the Commission IV report includes Farquhar amongst those who support fulfilment, his name has long been associated with fulfilment theology, and indeed Edinburgh 1910 regarded him, as has been noted, as "a typical representative" (WMC IV, 1910: 181).

I will now give an overview of the different christological expressions of many of the contributors to the Edinburgh Conference. In such a gathering, while agreement on the essentials of the Christian faith was secure, there were bound to be many shades of

27. In his discussion of Keshub Chunder Sen, in his *Modern Religious Movements in India* (1915), Farquhar refers to Sen's declaration that Christ fulfils Hinduism, "He comes to fulfil and perfect that religion of communion for which India has been panting, as the hart panteth after the waterbrooks. Yes, after long centuries shall this communion be perfected through Christ" (Farquhar, 1967: 62) and then, in his discussion of the development of Sen's christology, writes that in an 1882 lecture, "Christ is definitely called the Logos, the Son of God" and then quotes from Sen's own work, where Sen speaks in Logos terms of God "permeating the world" and the Holy Spirit "drags up regenerated humanity" (ibid: 62, 63). M. M. Thomas also makes reference to Farquhar's discussion of Sen and notes that, though Farquhar was "critical of many aspects of Keshub's life and thought", he believed that Keshub Chunder Sen was moving in the right direction (Thomas, 1969: 65). Thomas also discusses the thought of Manil Parekh about Sen, explaining that Parekh placed strong emphasis on Sen's identification of Christ with the Logos (ibid.). Hedges writes of Sen, "Sen's words [here] are pure fulfilment theology and would not be out of place in Farquhar's *The Crown of Hindusim* (Hedges, 2001: 141).

christological opinion and differences of emphasis. My purpose in this overview is to show a 'chistological mosaic' of Edinburgh 1910 and demonstrate that christology was a key theological issue, which continued to emerge from the contributions of the respondents, as well as in the general discussions of the Conference itself, in spite of the strictures on theological discussion. More influential voices will be given greater space, but there were also many missionaries whose influence was not extensive by any means, but who, nevertheless, exercised their christological voice.

Nicol Macnicol

Nicol Macnicol, a missionary with the United Free Church of Scotland, writing from Poona, India, exercised a strong sympathy with the searching of the non-Christian, recognising it as "a sincere attempt to find God, and learn His will" (Macnicol, 1910: 14).[28] Macnicol writes in fulfilment terms, explaining that the Christian missionary "must look for that which is the product of such seeking and which Christianity fulfils" (ibid.). He recognises the work of the Logos in enabling fragmentary truth in the non-Christian faith of the hearers of the Gospel message, but cautions against any attempt to cover over "what is wrong and evil in it" (ibid: 15). Macnicol engages in some lengthy discussion of Hindu belief in Bhakti and incarnation, concluding "In illustration of the way in which one may seek to make use of this aspect of Hinduism in preparation for Christianity, I attach a copy of a tract prepared by myself bearing the title 'Union with God' " (ibid: 17).

Macnicol is interesting in his emphasis on the cultural context of Christianity, recognising that Western Christianity has become distorted by the accidental, the racial and the temporal, and stresses the need to instead discern that which is fundamental and universal (ibid: 24). Again, the emphasis is on the person of Christ, rather than any system. Christianity cannot claim any special privilege on account of its origin, or its means of communication, but stands solely by virtue of its intrinsic excellence and the power it has to satisfy human longings and needs in the person of Christ (ibid.). The study of comparative religion aids the recognition that any Christian missionary work takes place in the context of other expressions of religious consciousness" (ibid.). In

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28. Catalogued at The Henry Martyn Centre as ECM 1/97.

1936, Macnicol wrote, based on his Wilde Lectureship in Natural and Comparative Religion at the University of Oxford, *Is Christianity Unique?* This comprised the third course of lectures, delivered in May 1935. The two previous lecture courses delivered by him had been published previously under the title *The Living Religions of the Indian People*. In it, Macnicol notes that it is now (in 1936) much more difficult to get congregations singing of humankind as 'heathen', or as 'vile', such changes have occurred in missionary thought (Macnicol, 1936: 12). Farquhar's work had "precipitated into actual missionary policy views that were widely held" (ibid.). It "formulated in terms what was in many minds" and "initiated a new missionary era" (ibid.). International Fellowships of Christians, Muslims and Hindus were meeting in India, to experience "fellowship in the deep places of the spirit, reaching out to each other to help each other towards the God whom all alike so desperately need" (ibid: 14). But this, he claims, is not, in fact, a new approach (ibid.). He refers to Justin Martyr, who "held that those who lived with reason, as Socrates and Heraclitus did, were Christians, and Clement of Alexandria maintained that philosophy was a 'paidagogos' to bring the Greeks to Christ, even as the Law was for the Jews" (ibid: 16). However, Macnicol cautions against an "easy tolerance" (ibid: 18) and makes the point that religion brings out sentimentality (ibid.). The issue is one of remaining loyal to the truth that Christianity has received (ibid: 19). The message of Christianity is not just a word, but a Word made flesh (ibid: 20).

Macnicol sets out to "consider in some of its primary aspects the relation of the great world religions with one another with a view to determining whether, and for what reasons, Christianity has a unique place among them" (ibid: 22). In his discussion of Christianity's place in the world religions, Macnicol deals extensively with the thought of Karl Barth and also of Kiekegaard, particularly Kierkegaard's mistrust of Hegelian philosophy (ibid: 168–71). He outlines Barth's thought with regards to the religions of the world and largely interacts positively with it, but then moves on to critique what he thinks are its excesses. Macnicol questions any belief in the thought of either Barth or Kierkegaard that "the image of God in man has been wholly obliterated by the Fall (ibid: 172, 173). To believe that with conversion a new personality comes into being is to hold with "the obliteration of all that was before and that was from God" and would mean "that man can have no consciousness within him even of his need for God" (ibid: 173). Taking up a theme that has its roots in nineteenth-century thought, as has been seen, Macnicol stresses, using the approach of Baron Von Hügel as an example, the

relationship God has with humanity not only as a transcendent Being, but as One who is immanent in humanity as well (ibid: 176). But, humankind cannot fashion God in its own image either, and cannot create a Christ who is "the leader of our company of dreamers, while Buddha leads another and Mohammed and Zoroaster others still" (ibid: 177). Here, Macnicol criticises the approach taken by the authors of *Re-thinking Missions*, who he interprets as considering "the task of the missionary to be rather to pool his religion along with the other religions than to announce it as a word of God" (ibid.). For Macnicol, the human being, even in his or her fallen and sinful state is "yet not abandoned by God, who holds him still by the roots of his being" (ibid: 180). So, "God is not only inalienably immanent in man by virtue of the first creation; He is also redemptively active in man through Christ" (ibid.). And, "The possibility of the bridge that God has built for us in Christ Jesus rests upon the fact that there is that living meaning, still present, not wholly dead, in every child of humanity, however fallen" (ibid: 181).

In his *India in the Dark Wood* (1930), Macnicol aims to attempt "The study of the modern Indian mind" (Macnicol, 1930: 10). Here, he emphasises, with regards to the role of the missionary, that he "must ever profoundly believe in and expect" that "wherever he goes with his message God has been there with it before him. That is why reverence towards all religions and the fullest sympathy with all the strivings of the human heart towards the unknown God must be primary characteristics of our attitude to those among whom we work and whom we seek to serve" (ibid: 180). The missionary "who is to guide India to-day through the dark wood must possess this rare combination of qualities. He must welcome every print upon the soil of the Indian spirit of the feet of the Lord Jesus, indicating that He, unnamed, or strangely named and unrecognized, once passed along that road" (ibid: 181).

Charles Freer Andrews

C. F. Andrews (1871–1940) was the archetype of the missionary who immersed himself in the culture to which he had been sent. He is described by Boyd as one of those who "threw in their lot with Gandhi and became openly critical not only of the British *rāj*, but of the 'western captivity' of the Indian Church" (Boyd, 1975: 87). Andrews had come to India in 1904, to teach in St Stephen's College and to serve with the Cambridge Brotherhood (Neill, 1966: 110) and in later years became friends with both Gandhi and

Rabindranath Tagore. He was certainly regarded as the most trusted European in India (ibid.). Neill, contrary to the opinion of many that Andrews compromised his Christian faith, believes that this was not the case. "He was not always prudent in action or cautious in speech; but in all his doings he was actuated by a simple, Johannine faith in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ" (ibid.). The importance of Andrews' thought is found in the fact that the Commission IV report quotes extensively from him. Andrews' intellectual foundations were buried deep in the soil that has been discussed so many times in previous discussion in this thesis. He was heavily influenced by Westcott and also by Charles Gore, and was particularly shaped in his thinking by *Lux Mundi*. "In such thoughts and in Gore's lectures at Cambridge, in which he fearlessly welcomed the application to every part of the Bible of the criteria of scientific enquiry, Andrews found his intellectual anchorage" (Chaturvedi and Sykes, 1949: 16). Westcott's "formative influence" on Andrews is "difficult to overestimate" (ibid: 17). Andrews spent summer vacations with the Westcotts (ibid.). There he learned from Wescott himself that "nothing, *nothing* that is truly human can be left outside the Christian faith without destroying the very reason for its existence" (ibid.). Hell as a motivation for preaching the Gospel had always been abhorrent to Andrews, so the emphasis in *Lux Mundi* on the Incarnation rather than the Atonement may have appealed to him (O'Connor, 1974: 11). Westcott had been instrumental in the founding of the Cambridge Mission to Delhi in 1881 on Alexandrian principles (ibid: 19, 20). Indeed, Westcott himself regarded it as "an Alexandria on the banks of the Jumna" (ibid: 20). "Its object was to represent in India what the School of Clement and Origen at Alexandria had meant for the early Church" (ibid: 22). There, Andrews had "a latitude afforded me far beyond that of most missionaries who have gone abroad" (ibid.).

Andrews' response to Commission IV outlines many of the central themes of his christology. He begins by referring to his "large correspondence with educated Hindus throughout the country arising out of literary work" (Andrews, 1910: 1).[29] In a clear reference to his interest in Westcott and *Lux Mundi*, he writes "I am more attracted today by Illingworth and Moberley than by Dale, more by S. Athanasius than by S. Augustine" (ibid: 18). He writes of his interest in the 'sacramental' view of the Christian faith (ibid: 17) and then expands on this by also adding the word 'mystical' (ibid: 18). The Christian

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29. Response no. 123. Catalogued at the Henry Marty Centre as ECM 1/4.

mystics of the Middle Ages "bring me more help in understanding Hindu thought and re-shaping my own, than books of a more formal type (ibid.). He places himself firmly in the circle of those to whom the Incarnation has become a central doctrine, again a probable resonance with the influence of the *Lux Mundi* school.

> I now look upon all human life and human history more from the central standpoint of the Incarnation. I think more of the extension of the incarnate life in wider and wider reaches of humanity, till all is summed up in Christ Himself. This is my continual thought rather than starting primarily from the Death of Christ as consequent on the Fall, and regarding the saving of individual souls from the punishment due to sin as the one great objective, and viewing all human history as one great mistake, as it were, – one great calamity with one single narrow method of remedy and reconciliation. (ibid.)

He expresses favour for the use of higher critical methods, "For the Christian apologist to take the reactionary position against 'Higher Criticism' and 'Modern Western Thought' would appear to me fatal in dealing with educated Hindus" (ibid: 17). In the context of his exposition of his thinking on the Incarnation, he explains, "In the New Testament the Epistle of the Ephesians and the Johannine writings have become more and more luminous and inspiring" (ibid: 18). In a bold statement, Andrews claims, "I should not condemn anyone who said he did not wish to define his belief in the Divinity of Christ, but who could from his heart say with the Apostle Thomas 'My Lord and my God' or with Simon Peter 'Lord, to whom should we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.' I should not condemn anyone who could not hold as an article of faith the Virgin Birth, but who could make the above confession of Simon Peter and Thomas" (ibid: 21). Here, he also writes of the fact that he no longer feels the need to *define* the Divinity of Christ, even though "it is to me more than ever before the centre of thought" (ibid: 20). He then goes on to say, "The Greek theology appears to me, in its later stages, especially to have gone too far in definition and Latin theology still more narrowly to have defined the Faith which should have been left more wholly a matter of heart and moral apprehension than a matter of intellect and logical reasoning" (ibid: 20, 21). In another bold statement, which says much about the depth of his Logos christology, Andrews writes, "I now find the anima Christiana in Guru Nanak and Tulsi Das and Kabir (according to John 1:9) in a way I never did before and I cannot use the word 'heathen' as I used to do" (ibid: 21). He speaks of the caste system as being a *praeparatio evangelica* (ibid: 13).

Other christological elements in the responses to Edinburgh 1910

Bernard Lucas, another contributor to Edinburgh 1910, had some previous authority as a writer on the topic of mission in India. In 1910 itself, he published his *Christ for India: Being a presentation of the Christian message to the religious thought of India* and later, in 1914, he wrote *Our Task in India: Shall we proselytise Hindus or evangelise India?* At the time of the Conference, his *The Empire of Christ: Being a study of the missionary enterprise in the light of modern thought*, had been in circulation for three years, having been published in 1907. In this book, Lucas had examined the mission strategies and approaches in the evangelisation of India, and he made some discerning theological points in doing so. He noted that the task "which Christian missions had set themselves to accomplish" was "very largely determined by the theology of those who undertook it, and in that theology the emphasis had been unduly placed upon the individual, to the exclusion of the race. The Church sent forth its missionaries to save the individual, and paid little or no regard to the race to which he belonged." (Lucas, 1907: 15). In his response to the Edinburgh Commission IV questionnaire[30], Lucas writes, "Every religion has been an attempt to reach out towards the highest , and though the highest may seem very low and degraded to the Christian, yet he should never forget the true signification" (Lucas, 1910: 7). The missionary, he insists, "should never be an iconoclast. Not destruction, but fulfilment is his mission" (ibid: 8). There are clear elements of Logos christology at work in Lucas' thought. In his opinion, attitudes to other faiths "will be determined largely by the theological position of the missionary" (ibid: 9). So,"it is hopeless to expect those who believe that every other religion is false and Christianity alone is the true religion, to adopt anything other than an attitude of hostility" (ibid). He believes that missionaries holding such attitudes "are in a decreasing minority" (ibid). Lucas promotes the attitude which believes that "religion, wherever found, is the evidence of the working of the Divine Spirit" (ibid: 11). Lucas expands on this in an interesting way by arguing "the essence of the Christian Gospel is not dogma and theology, but a distinct and unique spirit" (ibid: 14). Lucas, then, is promoting a christology which is very much inclusive and which transcends mere narrow theological definition. The Christian spirit, he asserts, is more powerful to the Hindu than the Christian creed (ibid: 15). Lucas appears here to be minimising the role of the Church and of credal affirmations in favour of a fulfilment christology which is strongly based on the person of Christ rather than on the

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[30] Catalogued at the Henry Martyn Centre, Westminster College, Cambridge as Response no. 1/91

institution of Christianity. This christology is developed more fully in *Christ for India*, published, as has been noted, in the same year at the Edinburgh Conference. The starting point to the task of bringing India to Christ must be "bringing Christ to India" (Lucas, 1910: vii). He is concerned with the missionary tendency to present a westernised Christ to India. In his view, "This is to bring a Christ to India Whom the few may doubtless accept, but not a Christ Whom the many will welcome" (ibid: viii). In an important observation, Lucas maintains "It is impossible for any Western to stand in the Hindu's place, as his eyes turn towards that wondrous figure of the Christ; but it is possible to stand by his side and try to direct his gaze in the right direction. It is not possible to do so, however, so long as one stands in front of him. One must face as he faces if one's direction is to be of any help to him" (ibid). The personality of Jesus is central to Lucas' christology. Lucas observes "In Christianity...the personality of Jesus provides the data out of which its theology is constructed" (ibid: 165). "Christian theology has many affinities with the doctrines of other religions, but it differs from every other in the fact that the constructive element in its theology is an historic personality who is regarded as the manifestation of the invisible God" (ibid: 166).

Lucas is very clear about the interaction between christology and missiology resulting in a new way of understanding Christ, a model of christological interpretation which arises out of the interface between the Indian context and Christ himself.

> His personality has introduced into the world a new standard which modifies the conception of the personality both human and Divine. This has been the history of religious thought in the West and it will be the same in the East. The conception of the Divine and the human which are characteristic of Hindu thought are as inadequate, in the light of the personality of Jesus, as those of the West. His appearance on the horizon of Indian religious thought foreshadows the rise of the New Vedanta in which the old dualism of a noumenal and phenomenal Brahma are resolved. India, however, must be left to give her own interpretation of the personality of Jesus, and to relate His religious significance to her own religious thought (ibid: 404).

Lucas writes of the missionary enterprise in the twentieth-century that it "needs a new presentation, if it is to meet with an adequate response" (Lucas, 1907: 2). This new response has to be influenced by "the different conception of the character of God which is dominant in modern theology. The Fatherhood of God with all it implies, is not a modern discovery; but the dominant position it occupies in modern Christian

thought is the distinctive feature of the theology of to-day" (ibid: 3). The concept of the Fatherhood of God is, in modern times, "the essential conception of the divine nature" (ibid: 4). Furthermore, "it is the revelation of a central relation between humanity and God" (ibid). Interestingly, Lucas argues that rather than understand God in terms of immanence, the religious conception emphasised by immanence "is better expressed for the majority of men by the idea of the Fatherhood of God and the Divine sonship of man" (ibid). The idea of the Fatherhood of God as explained by Lucas takes on a Maurician character. Lucas writes "It has become impossible to believe that millions of God's children have been and are passing away into endless torment without a single chance of redemption, or that the Divine Father has limited the revelation of Himself to an infinitesimal section of the race, utterly unmindful of the lot and destiny of the rest" (ibid: 5). The shift in emphasis onto the Fatherhood of God has led to "an altered conception of His providential dealing with the race" (ibid: 6). So, "We have come to recognise that salvation is a much greater and far more reaching purpose on the part of God than our fathers conceived it to be, and that throughout the whole family of man there has been a vast preparation for this great purpose of the ages" (ibid).

John Van Ess, writing from Turkish Arabia, also deals with this theocentric notion of fatherhood.[31] He lists "The Fatherhood of God and fellowship with him" amongst 'Elements in [the] Gospel possessing the greatest power of appeal' (Van Ess, 1910: 3). Van Ess writes, "Before I left America, Christ was to me pre-eminently the Savour from sin" (ibid: 4). This emphasis, however, had changed. He continues, "in America I held to theocentric theology in theory, and it was in practice Christocentric. Now, I find theocentric theology to be a vital, soul-satisfying system" (ibid: 5).

Timothy Richards, a missionary to China, places strong emphasis on Kingdom christology in his response. The message of the New Testament and of Jesus, he insists, to the whole human race is all about "the Kingdom of God in human hearts as a new · birth to immortality and adoption to the family of God" (Richards, 1910: 13).[32] This will bring about "the organization of these sons of God to form a Kingdom of God to regenerate society by the pervading light and love and all the graces of the Holy Spirit"

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[31] Catalogued at Henry Martyn Centre as ECM /133 and as no. 277 in Edinburgh 1910's own catalogue.
[32] Catalogued at the Henry Martyn Centre as ECM 1/110 and in the Edinburgh Catalogue as no. 92.

(ibid: 13, 14). Richards argues "It is not the Gospel which fails to win the Far East but the theology with which it is presented" (ibid: 16). Christian theology, Richards maintains, "needs revising to make the Gospel universally acceptable, and the out of date and out of place creeds should be dropped just as the N. T. dropped the sacrifices of the O. T. and just as modern science dropped its ancient science of astrology and geomancy" (ibid). This needs to be done "in view of the fuller knowledge of God's Providence and inspiration of the East which we now possess" (ibid). He had earlier on in his response written, "By presenting only the transcendent character of God and in practice ignoring or denying his immanence in human hearts and by presenting God's judicial rather than his Fatherly attitude towards sin, we unnecessarily create a great intellectual hindrance to the Gospel's acceptance" (ibid: 3).

Arnold Foster, a missionary in Wuchang, China highlights the role of Logos christology in the missionary enterprise[33]: "The Christian position which recognises the work of the Logos in every land enlightening all men has always been held to justify the Christian teacher in looking for traces of the knowledge of God among all races, and in gladly welcoming all such indications as he could find that the soul of man is naturally Christian" (Foster, 1910: 9). John P. Jones, a missionary in South India also referred to the influence of the Logos in his response.[34] Jones writes very much in fulfilment terms (Jones, 1910: 11). He argues "The broken lights of these ethnic faiths are, after all, lights from God, and are part of that revelation whose full-orbed beauty and illuminating grace is found in Christ and His faith alone" (ibid: 12). Jones had published his *India's Problem: Krishna or Christ* in 1903, and in it he had expressed the view that christology would be shaped in the Indian context in a way which would differentiate it from Anglo-Saxon Christianity (Jones, 1903: 128-130). In his response to Edinburgh, he continues in the same vein of thought. He stresses the importance of preaching "essential Christianity" (Jones, 1910: 22). "We have forgotten", he writes, "that during the last twenty centuries Christianity has adopted much in thought, in form and in institution from the people of the West who have accepted it and made it an essential part of their life. It is the burden of the Church in the West today to disentangle our true faith in its essential elements from those excrescences and unessentials" (ibid). Christ, in Jones' view, must be the basis of the reconstruction of Christianity in India, on Indian terms. "It must be the

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[33] Catalogued at the Henry Martyn Centre as ECM 1/36 and in the Edinburgh Catalogue as no. 54.
[34] Catalogued at the Henry Martyn Centre as ECM 1/76 and in the Edinburgh Catalogue as no. 184

business of India herself to give her own interpretation to this life, and to this death, and to give her own coloring to its teachings and we must not be surprised if that coloring is at many points very different from that which we have given" (ibid: 23).

From the selection of responses which has been discussed above, it can be seen that christological issues were very much at the forefront of missionary concerns as Edinburgh 1910 convenes. Missionaries on the mission field are very much aware of the christological issues which arise as a result of interaction with other faiths and as a result of christological reflection which has taken place at the home base. Missionaries are particularly conscious of the potential for the shaping of christology through its interaction with indigenous worldviews, and they are thinking theologically about the role and relevance of Christianity as a faith and of Christ as a person.

Edinburgh 1910 and the influence of Schleiermacher

The voice of Schleiermacher can be heard in the background of the missiological and christological debates which featured at Edinburgh. Alexander Fairbairn, who stood, as has been noted above, as a figure of influence in the theology of Farquhar, had been heavily influenced by Schleiermacher through the theology of Isaac Dorner (Cracknell, 1995: 73). This influence led him to reframe his theology with regard to both God and man (ibid). That such a reaction to Schleiermacher should occur is not surprising. One scholar asserts that Schleiermacher had sought "to demonstrate the real value of religion by extracting it from its traditional but false setting and discerning its true ground in the life of man itself" (Longman, 1978: 2).

Any re-interpretation of theology under the influence of Schleiermacher would result in something of an anthropocentric focus. Indeed, the charge of anthropocentrism had been levelled at Schleiermacher by Karl Barth. "As has now become plain, man, human self-awareness, determined namely as pious self-awareness, was doubtless for Schleiermacher the central subject of his theological thought (Barth, 1972: 458). In Barth's opinion, while Schleiermacher dealt with the two 'motifs' of both God and man, he had, in effect, reversed the order and placed man first (Longman, 1978: 19). He had "accepted the invitation of the Copernican world-views and the Enlightenment to convert the Word of God theology into anthropocentric theology" (ibid). David Bosch

also identifies this anthropocentrism as the dominant Enlightenment world-view (Bosch, 1991: 267, 268). Following the direction which Schleiermacher took in grounding religion "in the life of man himself" (Longman, 1972: 2), Fairbairn stated that religion was not "a science or any constructive or reasoned system of thought that can be opposed to it. It is simply spirit expressing in symbol its consciousness of relations higher than physical or social" (Cracknell, 1995: 74). More importantly, for Fairbairn, religion was "a permanent and universal characteristic of man, a normal and necessary product of his nature" (ibid). This point of view is, according to Richard D. Brandt, entirely in accordance with Schleiermacher's beliefs. "One of the main themes of Schleiermacher's theological work was that religion is a unique activity of the human spirit which consists neither in arguments, proofs and ideas, nor in being morally upright and worshipping God in specified ways" (Brandt, 1968: 304, 305). In a clear reference to the emphasis placed by Schleiermacher on the role of feeling and experience in faith, where 'feeling' is the essence of religion, Fairbairn writes of the human being's experience of religion "He grows into religion but works into theology, *feels* himself into the one, *thinks* himself into the other. He is religious by nature, theological by art. In this sense it can be said, there is only one religion but there are many theologies..." (Cracknell, 1995: 74, 75). It was the influence of both Schleiermacher and Hegel which led Fairbairn to investigate "the conceptions of God manifested in the world religions" (ibid: 73). Cracknell regards him as the first of the British theologians to make use of the scientific methods being employed by the new scholars of religion, particularly the Dutch and the Germans and credits him with having a direct influence on the authors of the report of Commission IV (ibid: 75).

Eric Sharpe attributes to Fairbairn J. N. Farquhar's interest in the "science of religion" or "comparative religion" (Sharpe, 1965: 129). Certainly in Fairbairn's *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion* (1902), Fairbairn insists in a Schleiermacherian vein that it is religious practice rather than speculative philosophy which should be used to interpret other faiths "No religion can be known in its Sacred Books alone, or simply through its speculative thinking and religious reformers" (Fairbairn. 1902: viii). He goes on to then to ask, as did Schleiermacher before him, what precisely the nature of religion is. "The philosophy that misreads the origin of religious ideas and the history of any religion will not, and indeed cannot, be just to the Christian; while he who would maintain the Christian might be just and even generous to all the religions created and professed of men" (ibid: ix).

Interestingly, in 1926, Rudolph Otto, himself a missiologist and delegate to the Jerusalem conference in 1928, in his foreword to Schleiermacher's *On Religion*,[35] used almost the exact same wording in phrasing questions about the nature of religion as Fairbairn does in his 1902 work, with Otto intimating that these are the very questions Schleiermacher himself asks (Schleiermacher, 1958: xiii). It is interesting also that Otto himself, in publishing his *Das Heilige* (1917), translated as *The Idea of the Holy* (1923), dealt with the area of " the intuitive and non-rational in man as the fundamental fact of religion" (Sharpe, 1975: 161). James Cox asserts "That Otto follows in a line from Kant and Schleiermacher through Ritschl is made clear from the way he emphasizes that religion is not primarily defined by concepts, doctrines or intellectual ideas, but by judgements of value, both experiential and moral" (Cox, 2006: 57). Fairbairn was enormously influential not only on Farquhar, but on the missionary movement as a whole. His theology mediated much of Schleiermacher's thinking. Cracknell believes his work to have been important for the development of the thought of contributors to Edinburgh such as T. E. Slater, Bernard Lucas and J. P. Jones (Cracknell, 1995: 79). Quite apart from Fairbairn, Schleiermacher's "ideas were used repeatedly in the writings of missionary theologians at the end of the Great Century" (ibid: 93). Essentially, Schleiermacher had identified that "true religion is sense and taste for the infinite" (ibid: 39). His importance for missionary thought is that as a result of his theology of religion, each religious expression of humankind could be viewed "as a *necessary* manifestation of the encounter between man and the infinite" leading to the need for students of religion "to attempt to understand each separate religious tradition on its own specific premise" (Sharpe, 1975: 20, 21). It was Schleiermacher's thought which forced missionaries of the kind discussed above, those who expressed openness to other world faiths, to think in a 'Hellenic' rather than a 'Hebraic' way about these faiths (ibid: 146). Sharpe makes the point, in writing about missionaries of that ilk, and others who wrote about comparative religion, that "it may be safely said that behind them all stand the figures of Schleiermacher in Germany, Coleridge in England and perhaps also Emerson in America" (ibid). Farquhar, who had played such a central role at Edinburgh, is placed by Sharpe within this sphere of Schleiermacher's influence. Schleiermacher had used evolutionary thinking to range religions on an evolutionary ladder with Christianity at the peak (ibid: 20) and Farquhar follows this example in establishing Christianity as the

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[35] I am working here from the 1958 reprint.

"evolutionary crown of Hinduism" (ibid: 153). In Farquhar's contributions to the World Missionary Conference, the influence of Schleiermacher's thought, mediated through Fairbairn, Sharpe would say, is evident. "Religion is one of the essential elements of man's nature, and every religion has its roots in certain elemental instincts deeply embedded in the soul of man" (Farquhar, 1910: 13). The expression of these instincts in non-Christian faiths is "crude" because of "the ignorance of primitive races" (ibid). However, Farquhar argues "all religions are in a sense valid, as being genuine products of man's religious nature. But while all religions are human, there is only one which satisfies all the religious instincts and yet can be held by modern thinking man" (ibid). This bears a strong resemblance to Schleiermacher's invitation in *On Religion* to study the every expression of faith in humankind. Here, Schleiermacher also acknowledges a descent into crudeness. "Though it may long ago have degenerated into a long series of empty customs…will you not, when you examine the original elements at the source, find that this dead dross was once the molten outpourings of the inner fire? Is there not in all religions more or less the true nature of religion, as I have presented to you?" (Schleiermacher, 1958: 216).

Kenneth Cracknell argues that Schleiermacher was also a strong influence on another significant figure at Edinburgh, T. E. Slater. "…Slater united the idea of the religious consciousness ultimately derived from Schleiermacher with fundamental conceptions about God and humanity originating in F. D. Maurice" (Cracknell, 1995: 115, 116). In his contribution to Edinburgh 1910, Slater writes of non-Christian religion as "the way in which other races have tried to worship God" (Slater, 1910: 49). "The instinct of worship prevails in all religions" (ibid: 64). Also, "One has but to trace out the idea of God as conceived in the chief religions of the world, to see how single rays of the great truth have illumined different minds…" (ibid: 68). Slater's statement about the 'single rays of the great truth' is a very Schleiermacherian concept in keeping with Sharpe's statement that "each religious tradition should be viewed as a *necessary* manifestation of the encounter between man and the infinite" (Sharpe, 1975: 20).Furthermore, Schleiermacher's ideas were widely disseminated through the work of A. V. G. Allen, who had developed his missionary theology by synthesising the thought of both Schleiermacher and Maurice and whose *The Continuity of Christian Thought: A Study of Modern Theology in the Light of its History* (1884), was extensively used in missionary circles and read and discussed by missionaries (Cracknell, 1995: 81, 93). David Cairns, the

Chairman of Commission IV had himself been strongly influenced by the thought of Schleiermacher expressed through the writings of Dr Newman Smythe (ibid: 368).

One other aspect of Schleiermacher needs a brief discussion and that is his debt to Herder and Herder's subsequent importance for missionary thinking. Barth's assessment of Herder has already been mentioned. "Herder's significance for those theologians who came after him can scarcely be rated highly enough. Without him the work of Schleiermacher and De Wette would have been impossible, and also the peculiar pathos of the course of theology in the nineteenth century...But for Herder, there would have been no Troeltsch" (Barth, 1972: 316). While Herder's direct influence is not mentioned at Edinburgh, the stance of many contributors to the conference, in demonstrating a Hegelian understanding of God working out his purposes, an understanding expressed in terms of seeing the religions of the world as rungs of a ladder with Christianity at the top, a view of religions also held by Schleiermacher, has its roots in Herder's notion of progress. This philosophy was developed in his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geshichte der Menschheit* (1784-91) (Ideas concerning the philosophy and history of mankind) and accorded equal status to the development of the rational and the irrational throughout human history (Sharpe, 1975: 20). Herder is an important foundational link in that chain of influence which spreads through Schleiermacher, Kant and Hegel to produce the world-view expressed by many at Edinburgh that because God could be at work in the world through his immanence in nature and in history, he could also be at work in the development of religious faith. Otto writes "Herder had awakened faith in and enthusiasm for the ideal of humanity. Hopes ran high for the eventual appearance of a perfect, well-rounded mankind which was declared to be the goal of all the forms and creations of nature, as well as the movement of history itself" (Schleiermacher, 1958: viii).

Edinburgh 1910 and the influence of Kant

One theologian above all links the influence of Schleiermacher and Kant together in terms of the missionary movement and that theologian is Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889). To understand Kantian influence on missiology, the role of Ritschl must be discerned. In the discussion of Schleiermacher above, Rudolph Otto's theology was identified with

that of Schleiermacher, Kant and Ritschl. Cox specifically places Otto in line with the Ritschlian school of thought (Cox, 2006: 35; 57). Ritschlianism has much in common with the thought of both Schleiermacher and Kant and the Ritschlian theological world-view played a strong role in the overall theological tenor of Commission IV in particular. The thinking of the Chairman of that commission, D. S. Cairns had been influenced by Ritschl, as had A. G. Hogg, a major figure at Edinburgh 1910, as has been seen above. Although Eric Sharpe cautions against viewing both Cairns and Hogg as whole-hearted Ritschlians (Sharpe, 1975: 284n), Cox certainly has no doubts about Hogg's status as a Ritschlian (Cox, 2006: 35). Both Cairns and Hogg had spent a period of time in Germany, where Cairns studied under Wilhelm Hermann and Hogg under Titius, both Ritschlians themselves (Sharpe, 1975: 284). Hogg's thought had also been shaped by Hermann, as well as by Kant (ibid). The 'General Conclusions' section of the Report of Commission IV, written by Cairns, in discussing the legacy of the eighteenth century philosophers who shaped the compromise between science and faith acknowledges the contribution of Ritschlianism and "its insistence on the deep distinction between the religious and the scientific views of the world and its refusal to blend them together into a premature synthesis" (WMC IV, 1910: 221). It would be fair to say that Cairns was certainly not a thoroughgoing Ritschlian, "but I learned a lot from it" (Cairns, 1950:135). Certainly, Ritschlianism influenced his thinking on the Kingdom of God as an ethical idea (ibid: 172). He uses Kantian theory on the role of practical reason and Ritschlian teaching on the connection between religion and morality to formulate his argument about the relationship between ethics and belief in the non-Christian belief systems (Cairns, 1906: 21, 22). Alfred E. Garvie, who had written the section on Islam in the report of Commission IV, had published a scholarly work on Ritschl in 1899 and two other important systematic theologians, W. Newton Clarke and W. Adams Brown, who had been strong proponents of mission, were influenced by Ritschl himself and by Julius Kaftan, a Ritschlian theologian (Cracknell, 1995: 301).

The importance of Kantian and Schleiermacher's thought as an underpinning for the missionary movement and particularly for the kind of missionary world-view expressed at Edinburgh, which incorporated that openness to other faiths and that appreciation of them having had their origins in genuine searching for the divine rather than in demonic desire, lies in the core idea of both thinkers that religion has its source, not in revelation, but in humanity itself. This was true for Kant because religion was a necessary postulate

for morality, according to his thought as expressed in his work on practical reason, and for Schleiermacher because of his belief that "The history of religions is comprised of humans putting into words, beliefs and rituals their core intuition of the universe" (Cox, 2006: 41). So, "it was religion when the Ancients…regarded every special form of life…as the work and as the kingdom of a being who in this sphere was omnipresent and omnipotent, because one peculiar way in which the Universe operates was present as a definite feeling, and they described it after this fashion" (Schleiermacher, 1958: 49). Cox compares the interpretations of religion advanced by Schleiermacher, Kant and Hegel and argues for strong similarities between them. They each reduced religion to "one singular core reality" (Cox, 2006: 43). Kant identified that singular core as morality, Schleiermacher as feeling and Hegel as the realisation of the Infinite in the finite (ibid). Ritschl built on Kant's own work on religion. He taught that the goal of all religion was "the attainment of blessedness or the highest good" (ibid: 48). Linked to this are pleasure and pain. The mind or spirit receives information from the world which it must evaluate. He established that value judgements stand at the root of knowledge (ibid: 50). Using Kantian theory, he contrasted scientific value judgements, which investigate the empirical, with independent value judgements which analyse the moral. He went beyond Kant by arguing that religious knowledge was a type of independent value judgement which was not confined to making a judgement on moral terms "since not every religion unites feelings of pleasure or pain with a moral will or ethical action" (ibid: 50). Rather, "religious cognition is evaluated on the basis of the satisfaction it produces in the individual's quest to attain the highest good as defined by a religion's particular view of the world" (ibid). This is in keeping with Kant's notion of the immortality of the human soul and its tendency towards "an end which combined perfectly happiness with the moral will" (ibid: 51). The end product of Ritschl's re-evaluation of Kant's thought was his belief that when a religion helps its adherents achieve feelings of satisfaction, it has achieved its purpose (ibid). He applied the same criteria to Christianity, although he believed that it "possesses and elevated sense of blessedness" (ibid).

The Ritschlian thinker, Wilhem Hermann, under whom Cairns had studied and who had also influenced A. G. Hogg, in his *Communion of the Christian with God* (1895) had acknowledged that faith in all religions, not only in Christianity, shares the same characteristics and produces some degree of communion with God. Non-Christian religious people could attain to faith (ibid: 54, 55). However, the coming of Jesus Christ

has radically changed the religious landscape and any other religious path leads to ultimate dissatisfaction. The deepest communion with God, the fulfilment of that 'feeling' put forward by Schleiermacher, could only be found in Christ (ibid: 52). Faith is not based on doctrines but on a feeling of being blessed and the satisfaction of a moral life. This faith can be experienced in non-Christian religions since it is not dependent on doctrines or churches, but it can only partially satisfy and true satisfaction can only be achieved in relationship with Christ. Cox believes Hermann to have "synthesized Schleiermacher's core of religion as feeling with Kant's understanding of religion as moral obligation and set both within a Hegelian emphasis of the operation of the spirit in history" (ibid: 54). Rudolph Otto too "stressed that morality within religion represents advanced stages in religious understanding, characteristic of higher religions like Christianity, but that the fundamental core of religion is associated with the feeling of the creature for the numinous…This core of religion cannot be reduced to thoughts or ideas, since it displays the human response to the utterly inexpressible, wholly other" (ibid: 57).

Both Ritschl and Hermann influence the missiology of the early twentieth century most directly through the figure of the missionary theologian A. G. Hogg, an enormously influential figure at Edinburgh 1910 and in subsequent missionary conferences. Echoing Hermann, Hogg drew a distinction between faith and faiths. "Faith is an inner trust and assurance; belief (faiths) are the intellectual expressions of that assurance" (Sharpe, 1965: 285). Cox writes, "Hogg credited the school of Ritschl with opening new horizons for contemporary religious thinking by demonstrating the superior vale of personal religion over theological and metaphysical speculation" (Cox, 2006: 59). Beliefs could change over historical periods; they are but opinions. Faith itself is a "core experience" (ibid). This, of course, had widespread ramifications as to how other faiths or belief systems could be viewed, since their core desires could be interpreted as valid searches for meaning and the divine and therefore of value. His later work argued "for a world which can be regarded not as bound by unchanging laws of nature, but as one which is plastic and malleable to the perceptions of faith" (ibid: 61). In so doing, he "drew heavily on Kantian formal categories of the mind, reinterpreted as faith, in which the world is shown to respond positively to the mental conceptions humans form about it" (ibid). The importance of this distinction between faith and faiths is its role in Hogg's critical evaluation of Hendrik Kraemer's view of Christianity as being in radical discontinuity with human interpretations of faith as expressed in non-Christian religions. Hogg's ideas

enabled those who stressed continuity to argue that this took place within the realm of faith, even if beliefs and doctrines demonstrated discontinuity (ibid). Ritschlianism, therefore, which influenced Hogg, Cairns, Otto and Garvie among others in the missiological field was an "innovative combination" (ibid: 62) which brought together Kant, Schleiermacher and Hegel into a synthesis that would have important implications for the development of the phenomenology of religion" (ibid). Its influence in religious studies "is far more significant than has been acknowledged previously" (ibid). Interestingly, Roger Hedlund quotes Arthur P. Johnston, a conservative missionary writer, as claiming "The missionary movement of the nineteenth century left its Pietist moorings at Edinburgh 1910. Pietism represented theological orthodoxy. The theology of Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Darwin and Harnack began to infiltrate the entire movement" (Hedlund, 1993: 64, 65). Hedlund saw this influence extend into Jerusalem 1928, which "stated its understanding of salvation in terms of religious experience, or personal and psychological 'wholeness' and 'experience' (reminiscent of the Schleiermacher theology)" (ibid: 67).

Chapter 7

Conclusion:

The christological legacy of Edinburgh 1910

In this thesis, I have set out to demonstrate the importance of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference of 1910 as a forum where christology was a constantly present theme in spite of the efforts made not only to mute its voice and the voice of other theological strands, but to actually silence and exclude it. While the majority of scholars of the event have largely accepted the exclusion of theological debate at Edinburgh as a necessary though regrettable price to pay for consensus and the smooth administration of the debates,[36] I have argued that the decision to exclude theological debate was disastrous for the field of christology because it was precisely within this field that the greatest and most fertile debates were taking place in the missionary world. The general view appears to be that the impact of the exclusion of theology was primarily that theology was therefore not discussed. I argue that the impact of the exclusion of theology was much wider than that and that its impact lay in the fact that because theology was not discussed then christological issues vital to the missionary movement were left unresolved.[37] In subordinating theology, particularly christology, to the consideration of mission strategy, this effectively took mission out of the supernatural and theological realms and relegated it to a largely administrative role, albeit one with a religious veneer. The contribution of this thesis to current scholarship on Edinburgh

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[36] Hedlund is positive about the consensus achieved at the conference and argues that mission did not need to be justified at Edinburgh. He argues that 'unexpressed theology' was evident at Edinburgh, but he then describes this in terms which are so vague and so broad that it is impossible to pin this 'unexpressed theolgy' down in any specific way (Hedlund, 1993: 23). W.H.T. Gairdner was at pains to at all times point to the consensual nature of the gathering (Gairdner, 1910: 5-7). Paul Hedges goes no further than to express a view that the exclusion of theology meant no clarification on the origin of religion (Hedges, 2001: 45). Maw notes without comment the view that the absence of doctrinal debate would increase attendance (Maw, 1990: 329). W.R. Hogg discusses the exclusion of theological debate, particularly Bishop Charles Brent's disagreement with the omission of theology, but gives no recognition of appreciating that this should have any real negative impact (Hogg, 1952: 112). Bosch hails the 'pragmatism' of Edinburgh (Bosch, 1991: 458, 459). Cf also Rouse & O'Neill, 1967: 360; Walls, 2002: 57.

[37] There is a minority of scholars who have recognised some of the implications of the exclusion. Among them is Stephen O'Neill, who acknowledges "There had been little discussion of theology at the Edinburgh Conference of 1910" (O'Neill, 1965: 454). He appears then to agree with those who view this as inevitable or without result "There had seemed little need for it, when all were at one on all the fundamentals" (ibid). However, later in discussing the growth of liberal theology , he goes some way in contrasting the tone of both Edinburgh 1910 and Jerusalem 1928, but he stops short of making a direct link with the exclusion of debate. Samuel Escobar laments the lack of theological definition at Edinburgh. He quotes John Stott who identifies "doctrinal indifference" as the "fatal flaw" at Edinburgh. He then makes a direct link between this an the growth of theological liberalism (Escobar, 2006: 10, 11).

1910 is that it examines its debates and its world-views in the light of christological developments of the day. It explores for the first time the explicit christology evident in the contributions of those of its contributors and respondents right across all eight commissions, many of whom were working on formulating a workable christology. This christology took particular account of the philosophies of Shleiermacher, Kant and Hegel as well as nineteenth-century debates on immanence and evolution and I have put the main christological approaches into their philosophical setting. It employed recent thinking on Logos christology and Platonic theory in an attempt to make the Christian faith relevant in both Christian and non-Christian societies. I have gone beyond the traditional discussion of Edinburgh 1910 which mainly focuses on the development of a theology of religions and have specifically focused on the area of christology. I have shown that this christology should be seen as part of a much wider debate within theological and philosophical circles. Those who contributed to the conference in specifically or largely christological terms continually demonstrated within their debates and arguments their debts to Hume, Schleiermacher, Kant, Hegel, Herder, the Cambridge Platonists, Maurice, Coleridge, Müller, Westcott and also the authors of *Lux Mundi*. To borrow some imagery from Müller's title *Chips from a German Workshop*, they were essentially hammering out their christologies on the anvil of their experience in the workshop of mission theology, but they were also, as individuals, part of a much longer line of Christian missionaries and Christian thinkers who were re-evaluating and re-interpreting Christ in a fresh and innovative way for both Christians and non-Christians alike.

I have examined each of the commissions of Edinburgh 1910 and explored the implicit and explict christology and other areas of theology to be found in them. This is the first time such an in-depth examination of specifically theological themes within each of the commissions has been explored, particularly with reference to christology. Generally, any discussion of theology with reference to Edinburgh has been confined to a discussion of Commission IV.[38] In my research, I have considerably widened the ambit of theological discussion to incorporate the rest of the proceedings, demonstrating that Edinburgh 1910, whether it liked it or not, or whether or not it could discern it from within, was certainly not a theological *tabula rasa* and did most certainly operate an implicit

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[38] See pp 7-10 above for a review of the context of previous scholarship on the conference.

christology. I have shown that Edinburgh 1910 cannot be seen in isolation from its philosophical roots and cannot be divorced from its historical context. In fact, rather than being viewed as the beginning of the ecumenical movement, it is primarily part of a continuum of missiological and christological interaction. The interruption of this continual process of interaction at Edinburgh was a needless and avoidable event which left the missionary movement all the poorer.

In researching this thesis, my primary aim have been to map out, analyse and explore the interaction and interplay between missiology and christology in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with particular reference to the role and impact of Edinburgh 1910. I have sought to show that far from being theologically moribund, or a-theological, Edinburgh was actually rich in theological material and bursting with christological potential. I have argued strongly against the majority view that because theological discussion was outside of its parameters, Edinburgh therefore does not contain any theological insight or expression of import.[39] Implicit within the view that Edinburgh did not contain much of any theological significance is the acceptance that in essence this is a 'given' with which missionary scholars have to work. The ramifications of the decision to exclude theology for the future of missions has not been made sufficiently clear. The majority of those who acknowledge the decision to exclude theological debate tend to do so in the view that such a decision did not result in any lasting negative consequences but was an unfortunate omission. It is viewed generally as an administrative device which was designed to ensure smooth debate[40]. Brian Stanley has shown that while this may have been one consequence, the actual impetus for the decision was far more ecclesiastically political.[41]

The best way to understand the ramifications of the exclusion of christological debate at Edinburgh is to examine what happened to the missionary movement in the years which followed. In doing this, I will first of all give a general overview and will then specifically focus on christological ramifications. Although the theologians discussed in Chapter 6 differed from each other in many theological respects, they were all attempting the same task, that of re-imaging Christ for the cultural and religious contexts in which they found

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[39] See p.5 above for a discussion of the views of other scholars of the event.
[40] ibid.
[41] See p.16ff above.

themselves. This was one task in which they were united, even though they may have approached it in different ways. The simplistic view of their approach would have been that it was syncretistic, but this view gradually grew to prominence and very much obscured the incarnational theology which underpinned their christologies.

Jerusalem 1928

Following Edinburgh 1910, the discussion on mission was carried on through the Continuation Committee, which eventually became the International Missionary Council (IMC) in 1921 (Hogg, 1952: 200ff). Considerable anxiety was being expressed by what were termed the 'Continental' representatives on the IMC regarding what they saw as a dilution of the Christian message. This was particularly felt among the Germans "Great anxiety was being expressed that in the handling of the Christian message and its relation to other faiths, there was a discernible shift into syncretism and that the missionary movement was in danger of moving towards the 'social gospel' position, then widely adopted in North America" (Yates, 1994: 65). The publication of Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods: St Paul's or Ours* (1912) and Daniel Johnson Fleming's *Whither Bound in Missions* (1925) caused particular disquiet among the German theologians, advocating what Yates describes as a "Christian radicalism" in mission towards non-Christian faiths which was entirely in keeping with the views of the sympathetic Edinburgh respondents (ibid: 59-65). As Jerusalem 1928, the next missionary conference approached, the Continental thinkers became increasingly alarmed by the over-sympathetic turn towards non-Christian faiths and a kind of 'humanisation' of the gospel, whereby it became almost indistinguishable from social action with a religious basis (ibid: 65). At Rättvik, Sweden, in 1926, the IMC declared its intention to enquire into how the Christian and non-Christian systems of the world could relate to each other (Hogg, 1952: 216). The legacy of Edinburgh had made its mark, however. Again, the focus among the members of the IMC, the body which would have the task of organising the 1928 gathering, was on consensus about everything to do with strategy and policy and the exclusion of theological debate. "the Council reaffirmed that to seek any theological consensus or to discuss or determine matters of doctrine lay beyond its province" (ibid: 217). Indeed, "the Council obviously had a strong theological undergirding and existed because of a common theological core among its members" (ibid). The legacy of the Edinburgh precedent was that the same unresolved christological issues re-emerged at Jerusalem, but

now they emerged in a very different context. As Cracknell points out, the emphasis was changing from the *missionary* message to the *Christian* message (Cracknell, 1995: 283). In the intervening years, an entrenchment or even a polarisation had taken place. The person of Christ had now gone from being a universal figure capable of being incarnated in the religions of the world, as had been expressed at Edinburgh and had been appropriated by the Church. Jerusalem 1928 had been characterised by tensions between the Continental delegates and those from Britain and North America. To some extent, this reflected similar tensions which had existed at Edinburgh, where the Continental delegates and respondents were more cautious in their approach to non-Christian religions and revelation, fearing syncretism (WMC I, 1910: 434-436). Prior to the Jerusalem conference, preliminary papers were sent out to the delegates and these caused disquiet amongst the Continental members (Yates, 1994: 67). The papers were accompanied by a letter which declared that at Jerusalem, "a fresh enquiry and statement regarding the distinctive character of the Christian message in relation to non-Christian systems is urgently needed" (RJM, 1928, vol I: v). In an effort to assuage the concerns of the Continental delegates, John Mott called a meeting at Cairo in 1927 and they were able to voice their concerns there (Yates, 1994: 65). The debates at Jerusalem were to centre largely around christological issues, particularly the role and relevance of the person of Christ. The uniqueness of Christ was at stake, it was believed (RJM 1928, vol I: 333, 343). One delegate reminded the gathering, "there is no salvation in Hinduism or Buddhism, but only in Christ" (ibid: 354, 355).

The Dutch theologian, Hendrik Kraemer published the report of the Cairo gathering and this shows quite clearly that the Continental delegates did not believe, from their reading of the preliminary material, that the uniqueness of Christ was being sufficiently emphasised. Their report contained a clear statement that the revelation of God the Father takes place uniquely in Jesus Christ (ibid: 418). The Cairo groups also stated, "The context of our message is the Father God, whose children we become through our Saviour Jesus Christ and the invitation to accept this salvation by faith" (ibid: 419-420). The statement then attempts to bridge a gap "though fully acknowledging the spiritual values in the non-Christian religions, we are disquieted by the question whether the offer of salvation to non-Christians can be made by setting over against one another the spiritual values of the non-Christian and the Christian religions, the scheme followed by most of the papers presented to us" (ibid). Their fears were not helped by the argument

of W. E. Hocking that the religions of the world should unite in mutual cooperation in the face of the secularist challenge (RJM, 1928, vol III: 168). Hogg writes, "Continental dissatisfaction with the tenor of Jerusalem's preparatory papers was marked. Their general approach towards non-Christian religions...provoked even in those Europeans who agreed to attend, a highly critical attitude towards the assembly (Hogg, 1952: 242). Oliver Quick writes of the tensions evident in the years before Edinburgh between those who argued for the universality of the gospel and those who wanted to maintain its uniqueness (Quick, 1928: 446, 447). The influence of Karl Barth had gained much currency amongst the German delegates especially. Barth had written in strong terms against any kind of natural theology as a basis for revelation of God. Jesus Christ himself was the only source of revelation (Busch, 1976: 224). The German missiologist Karl Heim expressed the fear that the concept of the Kingdom of God at Edinburgh would simply be subsumed into a statement of co-operation between nations (Hogg, 1952: 240-242). This was in response to the inclusion on the agenda of debates on secularism. Heim was deeply suspicious of syncretising tendencies with what he considered to be any kind of worldly enterprise. As also was Karl Hartenstein, who had also been considerably impacted by Barth's theology (Verkuyl, 1987: 29). On the more liberal side of the debate were figures like Nicol Macnicol and Rufus Jones. Macnicol was, as was to be expected, very sympathetic to Hinduism, while also holding to the belief that Hindus can ultimately only find what they are looking for in Jesus Christ (RJM 1928, vol I: 32) but Macnicol typically repudiated any kind of Christian triumphalism (ibid: 50-52). Rufus Jones, to the alarm of the conservatives, pressed for an alliance between the religions of the world against the challenges of secularism. These non-Christian religions were "witnesses of man's need for God and allies in our quest for perfection" (ibid: 338). William Hocking, later to figure prominently as a result of his *Rethinking Missions* (1932), also known as the Laymen's Foreign Missions Enquiry (LFMI), adopted an approach which was explicitly in support of Jones' position (ibid: 369, 370).

In the end, through a series of debate and counter-debate, a delicate balancing act was achieved at Jerusalem (Yates, 1994: 97-102). The fears of neither camp were fully realised, but the sense of Christian self-definition is overwhelming. The statement issued is evidence of an attempted balance, but the amount of space given to discussion of non-Christian faiths and their value systems is minimal in comparison with the discussion about what constitutes the Christian message. The *Common Declaration*, ringing with the

words "Our message is Jesus Christ" (RJM, 1928, vol I: 480) is very christo-centric and focuses on Christ as the only means of salvation, while also acknowledging in places that non-Christians can possess rays of light and truth (ibid). But, of course, Jerusalem had simply created another theological fudge. It had adopted a much more cautious and much less curious approach to other faith systems than had been evident at Edinburgh. The final statement is vague about the value of other religious paths and devotes only a small part of the whole to discussion of the relationship of Christianity to other faiths. However, the debates at Jerusalem had demonstrated the very wide range of views on the position of Christ and on the uniqueness and finality of his revelation in the Christian message. The outcome to lead to such assessments as that of Cracknell, who writes of the statement "There was not a trace of the sense, which was so manifest at Edinburgh...that there could be a life-giving encounter with other forms of faith and spirituality which might help Christians to do their theology better (Cracknell, 1995: 283), that of Timothy Yates who believes "The Jerusalem statement was a fine attempt to hold together positions which were certainly in danger of flying apart into opposing camps" (Yates, 1994: 102) and that of Bishop Stephen Neill, who believed Jerusalem to be the "nadir of the modern missionary movement", explaining "This was the moment at which liberal theology exercised its most fatal influence on missionary thinking, the lowest valley out of which the missionary movement has ever since been trying to make its way" (Neill, 1957: 151). He also remarks, "Evangelism was no longer in the centre of the picture, and no more was heard of 'the evangelisation of the world in this generation.' "

Yates also remarks that while the statement was a valiant attempt to hold together opposing views, "It could not, however be expected to provide finality" (Yates, 1994: 102). The Jerusalem statement simply perpetuated, or widened even further, the error which had been made at Edinburgh 1910 in that it failed to provide any christological resolution. Like Edinburgh, it set forth two approaches, the universalist approach and that which argues for Christian uniqueness and exclusivity and failed to adequately provide any theological bridge between the two. There was no christological synthesis which would unite the two approaches and, in a sense, each camp was cast adrift to gather its adherents together on separate shores. In spite of the absence of meaningful debate, Jerusalem was explicitly more theological than Edinburgh. It had less to do with strategy and more to do with self-definition on the part of the Christian Church. The focus on the Christian rather than the missionary message entailed a certain amount of

theological setting forth of what constituted that Christian message. So, while it was more theological, that theological focus was centred on its own understanding of Christian theology rather than on how Christ as the *logos spermatikos* could be at work in the world. The meeting, therefore, was intensely ambiguous. Cracknell believes "For whatever reason, the Christian movement had lost some of its nerve and had turned inwards. Little room was left for the contemplation of other religions as having any part to play in God's purposes" (Cracknell, 1995: 283). In Cracknell's view, the Edinburgh spirit was completely absent at Jerusalem. Gone was the sense "that there could be a life-giving encounter with other forms of faith and spirituality which might help Christians to do their theology better" (ibid). Hedlund highlights the ambiguity when he writes "Jerusalem manifested the social gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch on the one hand, the eschatological theology of Schweitzer and Barth on the other" (Hedlund, 1993: 63). The finals statement at Jerusalem, written by William Temple and Robert Speer, did try to be an even-handed document, which acknowledged that the light of God could be discerned in the faiths of humankind, but it only succeeded really in setting forth two views of Christian mission without any attempt to reconcile them. Yates describes Temple as "the arch-drafter of ecumenically irenic documents" (Yates, 1994: 68). His writing in the statement was "a typical piece of theological legerdemain" (ibid) from someone who often was led "to think he had found a solution, when he had found a phrase" (ibid).

Tambaram 1938

The period between Jerusalem 1928 and the next major missionary conference at Tambaram in 1938 was marked by attempts by both sides to consolidate their positions. The figure of Hendrik Kraemer (1888-1965) looms large here. Yates contrasts the thought of Oliver Quick, who argued that to acknowledge the spirituality of other religions should not be classed as syncretist but as an ability to see the presence of God in all places and A. G. Baker, who believed that "Jesus was seen to contain certain aspects which were universal and which could be offered to others beyond Christendom" (ibid: 104) with Kraemer, whose work "may be regarded as the counter-blast to the kind of theology of missions propounded by Baker and underlying the LFMI report of 1933" (ibid). *Rethinking Missions* had "contained effectively two views of Jesus present at the Jerusalem Conference: one, a vision of Jesus the teacher and example...and secondly, as a backcloth, the heavily dogmatic preached Christ...biblically

rooted enough, but as the inquirers were aware, failing to connect with the living concerns of the Chinese, Japanese and Indian peoples in their revolutionary ferment towards becoming modern" (ibid: 71). Hocking's work had caused quite a stir in the conservative ranks. Hocking writes "Western Christianity has in the main shifted its stress from the negative to the affirmative side of its message...there is little disposition to believe that sincere and aspiring seekers after God in other religions are to be damned (Hocking, 1932: 19). Other religions are "brothers in a common quest" (ibid: 31). He continues, "If there were not at the core of all the creeds a nucleus of religious truth, neither Christianity nor any other faith would have anything to build on" (ibid: 37). The report caused strong and angry debate in missionary circles. Kraemer, a strong Barthian, was asked to address the question of the Christian message at Tambaram, to "state the fundamental position of the Christian Church as a witness-bearing body in the modern world, relating this to conflicting views of the attitude to be taken by Christians towards other faiths and dealing in detail with the evangelistic approach to the great non-Christian faiths" (Kraemer, 1938: v). This he did in his *The Christian Message in a non-Christian World* (1938). Kraemer strongly emphasised the centrality of Christ. Mission has to 'witness' to Jesus Christ (ibid: vi, vii). Religious certainty could be the only escape from relativism (ibid: 6, 7). Human beings cannot bring about the Kingdom of God (ibid: 48). He stressed the radical discontinuity of Christianity with other faiths (ibid: 15-17; 138). Cracknell calls the results of Tambaram "sterile" (Cracknell, 1995: 283). Yates writes that C. F. Andrews' response to the book was to drop it in the bin (Yates, 1994: 117). D. S. Cairns, while sympathetic to what Kraemer was trying to achieve, viewed his Barthianism as being inconsistent with the generous view of other religions expressed at Edinburgh (ibid: 123, 124). Cairns was concerned at what he saw as a double-minded approach, where Kraemer on the one hand stressed Biblical realism and radical discontinuity, but also acknowledged that humankind was on a search for the divine. If all religions are a product of the human mind, they must also demonstrate a desire on the part of the human mind to search for God and for meaning (ibid: 123). There must be something in them which transcends nature (ibid). However, the change of emphasis which had occurred at Tambaram was remarkable. Indeed, as Cracknell had stated, "Little room was left for the contemplation of other religions as having any part to play in God's purposes" (Cracknell, 1995: 283). Hedlund writes, quoting James Scherer, "At Tambaram (1938) the missionary movement confessed the perennial faith of the Christian church...At Tambaram became once again the Word made flesh in whom God

had acted for men's salvation" (Hedlund, 1993: 97). Nevertheless, tensions had been evident at Edinburgh and the christo-centric missionary vision had not succeeded in stifling all opposing views: "Not unexpectedly, the findings of the Tambaram report reflected both strands; in regard to the non-Christian religions, there was a clear recognition that there were to be found among them deep religious experience and great moral achievements. Nevertheless, the missionary movement called all to the feet of Christ" (Yates, 1994: 120). This call to Christ "does not mean an evolutionary fulfilment but a radical breaking with the bonds of one's religious past" (ibid). Once again, it seems that Tambaram, as Cairns indicated, is speaking with two voices with no adequate christological resolution to resolve the two. The separatist and the syncretist are once again set forth without an overarching christological synthesis which would unite the two. H. H. Farmer recognised that Kraemer had not provided any adequate answers to the question of divine revelation since he had narrowed the possibility of revelation so exclusively to the person of Christ. All human efforts were repudiated (Farmer, 1938: 161). As a result, it could be said that this narrowing, which looked for an explicit expression of Christ, was in many ways the antithesis of the stress placed by the Edinburgh respondents on the implicit and immanent Christ.

The contribution of Edinburgh 1910 to christological thought for the missionary movement.

Taking into account, then, what transpired at Edinburgh 1910, Jerusalem 1928 and Tambaram 1938, what was the result of the exclusion of an exploration of christology at Edinburgh and what was it about the christological approaches of those theologians whose theologies were explored in Chapter six, which would have led to different outcomes at the subsequent conferences and the missionary movement as a whole? The respondents to Edinburgh 1910 had largely been sympathetic to non-Christian religions. It was rare to find an altogether unsympathetic or wholly negative response in the questionnaires and in the general debates. But, some respondents expressed themselves in christological terms of such clarity and creativity that they were literally, on the mission field, formulating innovative and workable resolutions to the challenges faced from the non-Christian systems with which they came into contact. Their approaches were prototypical attempts to create a synthesis of the twin concepts of Christian and non-Christian revelation and they were doing this from a position of strong adherence to the

Christian faith itself. Jerusalem 1928 and Tambaram 1938 both adopt stances which separate into two opposing but sympathetic camps the Christian and the non-Christian. The non-Christian camp is envisioned as being separate, but is viewed with sympathetic perspective from without. The respondents to Edinburgh 1910, discussed in chapter six, actually envisioned the divine as *within* the non-Christian systems as a result of the doctrine of the *Logos* and the twin concepts of immanence and evolution. They were not effectively bringing anything in, but bringing to fruition what was already there. Their christology was not an imposition from the outside, but an awakening of the latent Christ within the system. In adopting this perspective, they also avoided the confusion which emerged between what was of the Church and what was of Christ at Jerusalem and Tambaram. They drew a sharp distinction between Christ and the Church. In this final section, I will outline the way in which their perspectives offered so many possibilities for a christology which would have avoided an ecclesiastical hegemony and will reiterate my argument that the failure to discuss and develop christology at Edinburgh was a serious error which had long-term repercussions. The theologians at Edinburgh who were offering christological answers to questions within the theology of religions were engaging in a Christian-centred approach to other faiths, but they were offering a christology which bridged the gap and gave the hope of synthesis, rather than polarisation. They were not confining Christ to the Church or to the realms of Christendom, but reinterpreted and revisioned incarnational teaching to take account of the immanence of Christ. Christ was still the divine which was at work, but he was implanted *within* and as a result of the historical process, a process which Schleiermacher and Hegel had championed, the divine had brought about an evolutionary development which could result in very different ways of expressing the Christian faith. These expressions could take the form of what were on the surface non-Christian beliefs and practices, but which in essence reflected the action of and presence of the divine, albeit in a mode which was particular to a specific faith system and its historical evolution. The thought of Kant, Schleiermacher, Hegel, Maurice, Westcott, the authors of *Lux Mundi* and others had created a philosophical foundation wherein the divine could be seen to be at work in the created order. The important issue to remember here is that the divine was at work *within*.

Traditional theology and christology had operated with the concept of original sin that went back at least to Augustine in the fourth century. Now, in the wake of the Enlightenment, the whole idea of human nature corrupted by sin was vigorously opposed ... A host of traditional Christian, especially christological, doctrines came to be reconsidered and reshaped in light of this new outlook ... not only Christianity but also other religions came under the scrutiny of this new independent reason. Of all the tenets of Christian faith, this kind of radical shift most immediately affected christology. (Kärkkäinen, 2003: 92)

The contributors to Edinburgh were developing their own christologies using the philosophical underpinnings of a new intellectual climate within Christianity which was utilising the ancient concepts of Logos christology and Christian Platonism along with the more recent concepts of evolution and immanence. Applied to christology and missiology, this climate was opening up new possibilities. Missionaries on the field were all too aware of the need for these possibilities, and what were termed the Anglo-Saxon missionaries, those from British and North American backgrounds found themselves more open to them than their continental counterparts. The failure to recognise the need for new approaches in christology at Edinburgh, meant that at both Jerusalem and Tambaram, the traditional polarisations were perpetuated.

In what way, then, could the reorientation of christological focus expressed by the Edinburgh respondents have contributed to the construction of a different christological understanding within the realm of missiology, and what did they have to offer which was different from what emerged at Jerusalem and Tambaram? First of all, for many of the respondents, the theological starting point was different to what was being asked by many at Edinburgh and certainly at Jerusalem and Tambaram. They were not asking, as Kraemer seemed to be, whether or not God revealed himself in the religions of the world, but on the basis of the *Logos* they used the assumption that he *was* as their starting point. This does not mean that they separated the concept of revelation from the person of Christ, but rather they placed Christ right within the religious, and later the secular, systems of the world. So T. E. Slater, in his *God Revealed* lectures of 1876, discussed by Sharpe (1965) could write that his aim was "Not to present Christianity as an antagonistic Religion among other Religions of the world...but in the firm persuasion that all are *by nature* Christians" (Sharpe, 1965: 98). This led him to continue "The aspect in which I

would set Christianity before you is not an aspect of antagonism but of *consummation*" (ibid, emphasis mine). When questioned as to his changing christology, Slater stated that he was attempting to set forth the divinity of Christ to searching Hindus, rejecting the presentation of Christianity as a body of doctrine (ibid: 99). Instead, using the principles of consummation and fulfilment, and building on the work of Max Müller and Monier-Williams, "he was prepared to attempt what was at the time a novel presentation of the Christian gospel" (ibid: 98). In his submission to Edinburgh, he claims "Christ has always been the spiritual light of the world and the source of those truths in other faiths that have nourished the best souls" (Slater, 1910: 58). He continues "One has but to trace out the idea of God as conceived in the chief religions of the world, to see how single rays of the great truth have illumined different minds, and at the same time how Christianity embraces all these conceptions in the one perfect Divine Idea which it presents" (ibid: 68). Slater is a typical example of many others who took as their starting point the *Logos* presence of Christ within the faiths, working through the faiths to both prepare hearts and to guide into truth. Timothy Richards wrote that in emphasising the transcendent rather than the immanent character of God in human hearts "we unnecessarily create a great intellectual hindrance to the Gospel acceptance" (Richards, 1910: 3).

Secondly, the notion of fulfilment incorporated within itself the idea of continuity. While Farquhar may have seen the process of fulfilment as eventually culminating in replacement, his theology meant that Christianity was in continuity, not radical discontinuity, with each and every one of the world religions since it could be the fulfilment of each one. In approaching Christ as the fulfiller, he inevitably worked from an immediate evolutionary starting point. The religions of the world no longer could be seen as products of demonic invention, or as had been suggested at Tambaram as products of the human mind. They had to be viewed as stages in the evolutionary process and they contained within themselves spiritual values which would resonate with Christian spiritual values, since they were, in effect, part of a process in which Christ was intimately connected. "Religion is one of the essential elements of man's nature and every religion has its roots in certain elemental instincts deeply embedded in the soul of man" (Farquhar, 1910: 13). As a result, "every religion, no matter how crude or degraded, is worthy of the reverence...of the Christian" (ibid: 14). Hogg, who had difficulties with Farquhar's views on fulfilment, in introducing the distinction between

faith and faiths, which was itself a Maurician concept, acknowledged the whole principle of faith as a sign of continuity between the religions of the world and Christianity. This continuity took place on the level of faith rather than on the level of belief. Revelation was not restricted to Christianity (Sharpe, 1975: 287). So, while their might be discontinuity in terms of doctrines and beliefs, the area of faith was a universal one for humankind and one which Christ could indwell. (ibid). Members of other religions were "equally pilgrims of faith" with the Christian (Hogg, 1910: 17). Fulfilment theology later gained greater currency within Roman Catholicism and in Kärkkäinen's view paved the way for Vatican II (Kärkkäinen, 2003: 105).

Thirdly, there was a call among missionaries for a new way of doing theology. This is typified in the approach of Bernard Lucas, who I discuss at some length in Chapter six. Lucas blames the missionary's theological approach as the primary stumbling block in mission. What is needed is not just a change of strategy, but of theology as well (Lucas, 1907: 15; 1910: 9). This change of theology should take account of the *Logos* and fulfilment, but Lucas also places a strong emphasis, as do other missionaries who correspond with Edinburgh 1910, on the idea of the Fatherhood of God. This emphasis, he argues, will lead to "an altered conception of His providential dealings with the race" (Lucas, 1907: 7). This theocentric shift, Lucas claims, will make the work of God in the religions of the world far more evident and he uses the notion of divine Fatherhood as an argument against the damnation of the lost, since no divine Father would leave himself without witness in vast swathes of the world (ibid: 6).

Fourthly, the christologies expressed by the respondents to Edinburgh were intensely incarnational rather than dogmatic, immanent rather than transcendent. C.F. Andrews was a typical example of this perspective. "I now look at all human life and human history more from the central standpoint of the incarnation. I think more of the extension of the incarnate life in wider and wider reaches of humanity, till all is summed up in Christ Himself" (Andrews, 1910: 17, 18). He starts not, as does Tambaram in the Barthian framework, "from the death of Christ or consequent of the Fall" (ibid: 18). He continues "I am more attracted today by Illingworth and Moberley than by Dale, more by S.Athanasius that by S. Augustine" (ibid).

It can be seen from the above that in the responses to Edinburgh 1910 and in the participation in debates by many of those who had responded, was contained a treasure trove of christological innovation and radicalism. The Conference had at its disposal creative, imaginative and novel christological perspectives which were rooted in contemporary thinking. The influence of Westcott and *Lux Mundi* is palpable in so many of the responses. Christ was viewed not as being outside of creation, but as dwelling intensely within and working from within. In neglecting to harvest effectively this wealth of christology, which had been rooted in solid Christian thinking, the convenors of Edinburgh 1910, in spite of their good intentions, deprived the Christian missionary movement of the time of a rationale for interaction with the non-Christian faiths The resulting failure to deal with christological issues at Jerusalem 1928 and Tambaram 1938 was evidence that the missionary movement had not had the experience of exploring sufficiently an incarnational, immanentist view of the activity of God in the word which was rooted in a well-thought out evangelical theology of religions. In Cracknell's view Amsterdam 1948, Evanston 1954 and New Delhi 1961 also failed to adequately formulate a christological stance which would satisfy the demands of a theology of religions which takes account of the *Logos* presence of God in the history of religious evolution. John Stott's view that the failure to deal with theology led to rampant liberalism is a perceptive one, but I would argue that this lurch to what Stott views as liberalism happened not because Edinburgh did not sufficiently outline the message of the Christian faith but that it happened because Edinburgh did not adequately provide a christology which would have enabled both 'liberals' and 'conservatives' to adopt a theology of religions which would have a solid Christian base but yet be wide enough to embrace other revelation of God under the incarnational and immanentist view of divine activity.

Looking back at the questionnaires written by the remarkable men and women who responded to Edinburgh 1910 causes the reader to be immersed in a process of intense and intimate engagement with the faiths of the worlds they inhabited. What is clear is that nothing the Christian would consider to be essential to faith is lost by their engagement. The voices of those men and women have largely been forgotten over the years, but their approaches to the religious peoples of the world continue to inform and shape missionary thinking and the approaches of new generations to mission and engagement continue to vindicate their thinking. The current involvement of Churches

all over the world in what are called 'Incarnate networks' and the whole issue of the emergent church and new ways of doing church draw on the same wellsprings which sustained the respondents to Edinburgh 1910. I have set out in this thesis to engage with their christological thought and to demonstrate that there is a strong and rich heritage of christology from Edinburgh 1910. I have explored in depth the implicit and explicit christology evident in the debates and reports of this amazing conference. I have shown that far from being a theological desert, Edinburgh was actually a hive of theological activity and a source of theological hope. I believe that for anyone who researches these extraordinary documents of Edinburgh, that hope will continue to fascinate and inspire.

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