

depends on reasoning and intuition and is not dependent on empirical observation or fact.

ELIADE, Mircea, (1907-1988): Romanian historian of Religion, whose original ambition was to be a novelist. He became professor of RELIGIOUS STUDIES at the University of Chicago in 1956 from where he exercised a vast influence on the development of religious studies. Eliade's early novels, only recently translated into English, are said to have a FASCIST tinge, raising doubts about some of his philosophical assumptions. His work reflects an interest in a highly MYTHICAL abstract spirituality which has been highly criticized by anthropologists and historians for its detachment from EMPIRICAL reality. It includes *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom* (1936), *The Myth of the Eternal Return* (1954) and *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (1958).

POSTMODERNISM: There are various contemporary understandings of the meaning of Postmodernism, the most popular being a largely literary INTELLECTUAL movement strongly influenced by French PHILOSOPHY, especially the views of DERRIDA and FOUCAULT, which seeks to DECONSTRUCT texts to arrive at new insights into their meaning. A more general use of the term implies a movement which recognises the limitations of locality and ethnicity implicit in ENLIGHTENMENT and other forms of MODERN thinking such as MARXISM. In the latter sense postmodernism is an attempt to gain a HOLISTIC view of things which goes beyond the limitations of nineteenth-century and earlier forms of twentieth-century IDEOLOGIES.

Not many libraries can afford to buy the sixteen volumes of Eliade's *Encyclopedia of Religion*. But every Theological Library and many students of theology and/or religion ought to have access to this useful resource.

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Awakening to a World in Need. The Recovery of Evangelical Social Concern

Timothy Chester

Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993, 240 pp., £9.99 ISBN 0-85110-989-6

RÉSUMÉ

Il s'agit d'une histoire très complète et parfois détaillée de l'intérêt croissant pour les préoccupations sociales parmi les croyants évangéliques depuis les années 60 jusqu'à nos jours. Pratiquement seuls les Etats-Unis et la Grande Bretagne sont pris en considération. L'ouvrage est publié à l'occasion du 25e anniversaire de 'Tear Fund' (prototype britannique du SEL en France et en Belgique). Il n'y a guère de démonstration théologique; mais on y trouve une bonne présentation des débats sur les rapports entre les préoccupations sociales de l'Eglise et l'évangélisation.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Es handelt sich hierbei um eine äußerst umfangreiche und z.T. detaillierte Darstellung, die die zunehmende Betonung sozialer Anliegen unter Evangelikalen in der Zeit von 1960 bis heute dokumentiert. Sie befaßt sich nahezu ausschließlich mit Großbritannien und den USA. Das Buch markiert den 25. Geburtstag von „Tear Fund“. Es bietet nicht eine theologische Argumentation, sondern stellt die Debatte um die Relation von sozialen Anliegen und Evangelisation dar.

This is a very full, and in places detailed, history of the increase of an emphasis on social concern amongst evangelicals from the 1960s to the present day. It is almost entirely concerned with Britain and USA. It is well researched and well written, relying constantly on quotations from the main actors and conference documents.

Significantly, it shows that the resurgence of social concern followed to a considerable extent the exposure of evangelicals to the facts of social need. Television played a considerable part in this as is documented by the effects of major international disasters on giving to Tear Fund. Speakers from the Third World at international conferences were also important. Chester does not quite do justice to the already on-going social work before 1960.

Where evangelicals were rudely faced by need, they frequently were active all along, as in medical missions abroad and in the work of the City Missions and Salvation Army, which Chester does not mention, at home. It is true, however, that middle class Christians and thinkers were preoccupied with evangelism, and defending the Gospel against the avalanche of liberalism. As the author says, they had often over-reacted against 'social gospel' liberalism and retreated from the field. This was much more so in USA than in Britain.

The book gives a good deal of well-deserved space to Tear Fund and other relief agencies. The author now works for Tear Fund and this book marks its twenty-fifth anniversary. What is well brought out is that when faced afresh with acute social need, evangelicals were rather groping for a theology of it and its relationship to evangelism. This is documented as the history unfolds but is nowhere brought together into an extended discussion. It is clear that several issues overlap. Is social action a part of the gospel, a consequence of it or a rival and distraction? Should the call to social repentance be part of gospel preaching or is it a minor aspect of wider personal repentance? Furthermore, which is the right approach to social action: one centred on Creation or one centred on the Kingdom of God? Or is it both? If both, where do we see the Kingdom—in the lives of believers or wherever good is done by unbelievers also?

The author suggests that the answer lies in what is called a 'holistic' approach, which has been largely adopted by Tear Fund. He traces the phrase back to Senator Mark Hatfield in 1969 and it recurs often in different contexts with somewhat different meanings and neatly avoids most of the theological debate. From a pragmatic point of view that is probably wise for a relief agency that cannot under charity law enter into politics. The different theological foundations will, however, have a major influence on what kind of social action is followed.

A short chapter discusses the difference between relief and political action and gives some encouraging and some disastrous examples of evangelical political involvement. There is perhaps an implicit, though not explicit, warning that this is a very dangerous field, even though the Nineteenth Century evangelical reformers in the U.K. achieved such marvellous successes—until they became over-confident. Missionary work transformed whole cultures for the better, while making a number of mistakes, and we have inherited

the fruits of much legislation for the social good which we now see being eroded by materialism. A clearer theological base than is at present available is needed if there is to be a confident programme other than an attack on particular issues that cry out for attention. Theological work continues and some of it is described in outline in this book. Unfortunately, the Nineteenth Century reformers did not leave any clear theological legacy other than a concern to respond in love to perceived needs. Perhaps we should learn from that simple, but effective, approach, while we discuss further.

The author is to be thanked for an excellent survey of what has happened. It is not a theological argument, but it follows the history accurately and defines most of the main positions that have been held. That there has been a ferment of discussion there is no doubt. Tear Fund illustrates the fact that there has been a massive growth in giving to social needs. Chester quotes John Stott as saying that the need now 'is to demonstrate in practice that what we're saying about the marriage of evangelism and social action is true'. In twenty years' time, one hopes that there will be many more good examples to cite, showing what this means in practice.

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***Geschichte des Pietismus. Band 1.
Der Pietismus vom siebzehnten bis
zum frühen achtzehnten
Jahrhundert***

**Martin Brecht (Hrsg., in
Zusammenarbeit mit Johannes van
den Berg, Klaus Deppermann,
Johannes Friedrich Gerhard
Goeters und Hans Schneider)**

Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht,
1993, 584 S., 120.00 DM, ISBN
3–525–55343–9

SUMMARY

This 'History of Pietism' is the first part of the planned four-volume compendium of Pietism, being prepared by the Historische Kommission zur Erforschung des Pietismus (the Historical Commission for Research into Pietism). As the first work of its kind in the twentieth century, it