

Towards a Missionary Theology for Europe: Conclusions from the Ecumenical Debate on the New Evangelization of Europe between 1979-1992

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ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Zwischen 1979 und 1992 intensivierte sich auf verschiedenen Konferenzen das ökumenische Gespräch über Neuevangelisierung und kontextuelle Missions-theologie im aufbrechenden Neuen Europa. Dieser Reflektionsprozess wird hier in Form von drei kontextuell-missionstheologischen Modellen interpretiert: (1) ekklesiozentrisch-inkulturativ, (2) kosmozentrisch-befreiungstheologisch, (3) biblizentrisch-kommunikativ. Besonderes Augenmerk liegt dabei auf dem jeweiligen theologisch-kulturellen Europabild und dem damit zusammenhängenden Missionsverständnis. Aus dem kritischen Gespräch mit diesen drei Modellen ergeben sich richtungsweisende Perspektiven einer biblisch-kontextuell orientierten Missiologie für Europa: (1) Die Bibel als der klassische (normative) und kreative missiologische Text im Kontext Europas hält den Kirchen Europas die *Missio Dei* als beständige Herausforderung vor Augen. (2) Europäische Religiosität heute ist postchristlich und polytheistisch. Sie enthält sowohl

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SUMMARY

Between 1979 and 1992, as a New Europe dawned, ecumenical discussion at various conferences concerning new evangelisation and theology of contextual mission became a hot topic. This resulted in three models of theology of contextual mission: (1) ecclesiocentric-inculturated, (2) cosmocentric-liberation theological and (3) biblicentric-communicative. Distinguishing features were situated in the respective theological-cultural picture of Europe and the accompanying understanding of mission. From critical dialogue with the three models

Brücken als auch Barrieren für die Kommunikation des Evangeliums. (3) Europäer/innen benötigen Gemeinschaften als Plausibilitätsstrukturen biblischer Wahrheit, die ihnen zeigen, wie das Evangelium in Europa heute wahr wird. (4) Evangelistische Kommunikation in Europa muß sowohl narrativ als auch kreativ sein, mehr als andere aber muß sie angesichts schöner medialer Mythen die einzig wahre und lebensverändernde Geschichte Jesu Christi erzählen. (5) Nur das jüdisch-christliche Menschenbild (und das biblische Gottesbild) mit seiner Spannung zwischen Freiheit, Verantwortung und Versöhnung kann eine dauerhafte Grundlage für Pluralität und Frieden in Europa bieten. (6) Mission in Europa muß von den missiologischen Erfahrungen der christlichen Gemeinden in der nicht-westlichen Welt lernen, weil Weltmission heute mitten in Europa geschieht. (7) Mission in Europa ist eine biblisch-spirituelle Herausforderung, die sich nicht in menschlichem Denken und strategischem Planen erschöpft, sondern mit dem souveränen Handeln Gottes rechnet.

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suggestive ways forward for a biblical-contextual oriented Missiology for Europe presented themselves: (1) the Bible as the classic (normative) and missiologically creative text in the context of Europe keeps the mission of God as the constant challenge before the church's eyes. (2) European religiosity today is postchristian and polytheistic. It contains both bridges and barriers for the communication of the gospel. (3). Europeans need communities to provide plausibility structures for biblical truth, to show them that the gospel is true in today's Europe. Gospel-communication in Europe needs to be narrative as well as creative; more than anything else t

needs to relate in the light of attractive spiritual myths the only true and life-changing story of Jesus Christ. (5) Only the Judaeo-Christian anthropology (and the biblical view of God) with its tension between freedom, responsibility and reconciliation can offer a lasting basis for plurality and peace in Europe. (6) Mission in Europe

must learn from the experience of Christian communities in non-western situations, because word mission is taking place in Europe itself. (7) Mission is a biblical-spiritual challenge which does not see as sufficient the planning strategies of human beings, but takes into account God's sovereign action.

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RÉSUMÉ

De 1979 à 1992, alors qu'une nouvelle Europe se dessinait, le sujet d'une nouvelle évangélisation et d'une nouvelle théologie de la mission contextualisée est devenu brûlant dans les discussions œcuméniques. Trois modèles théologiques en sont l'aboutissement : 1) le modèle ecclésiocentrique prônant l'immersion dans la culture ; 2) le modèle cosmocentrique prônant la théologie de la libération ; 3) le modèle bibliocentrique prônant la communication. On s'est efforcé de dégager les traits distinctifs de l'environnement théologique et culturel européen et de la compréhension de la tâche missionnaire qui lui est associée. De l'examen critique des trois modèles sont ressorties des perspectives suggestives pour avancer vers une missiologie pour l'Europe orientée à la fois bibliquement et contextuellement : 1) La Bible, texte classique (normatif) qui fonde une missiologie créative dans le contexte européen, place constamment l'Église devant l'appel à la mission de Dieu. 2) La religiosité européenne d'aujourd'hui est post-chrétienne et polythéiste. Elle comporte à la

fois des passerelles et des barrières pour la communication de l'Évangile. 3) Les Européens ont besoin de communautés fournissant des structures de plausibilité de la vérité biblique pour leur montrer que l'Évangile est vrai dans l'Europe d'aujourd'hui. 4) La communication de l'Évangile en Europe doit être narrative aussi bien que créative ; par dessus tout, pour des gens attirés par divers mythes spirituels, elle se doit de proclamer l'histoire de Jésus-Christ comme vérité seule capable d'engendrer des vies changées. 5) Seule l'anthropologie judéo-chrétienne (et la conception biblique de Dieu), avec sa tension entre la liberté, la responsabilité et la réconciliation, peut offrir une base durable pour la pluralité et la paix en Europe. 6) La mission en Europe doit tenir compte des expériences des communautés chrétiennes qui vivent ailleurs que dans le monde occidental, car la mission auprès d'autres cultures se déroule aussi en Europe. 7) La mission est une tâche biblique et spirituelle pour laquelle compter sur les stratégies humaines est insuffisant, mais on doit compter sur l'action divine souveraine.

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What makes Europe a mission country? Is it the fact that Europe is a foreign and even pagan culture for the majority of evangelical Christians who by now live in Asia, Africa and Latin America? While it is possible and necessary to discuss whether contemporary European culture is pagan or postchristian or both at the same time and what this means, the challenge remains: a growing majority of Europeans today do not know the biblical witness of and a personal relationship to Jesus Christ and its saving, creative and transforming consequences for their personal and communal lives and the multi-faceted European culture(s) in the global context and on the threshold to the future.

What then should be the foundational lines of a biblical and contextual theology that will help to reflect on this missionary challenge? I will start by focussing on the ecumenical debate which took place between 1979 and 1992 on a European level in the *Roman Catholic Church* (RCC), the Protestant and Orthodox Churches which form the *Conference of European Churches* (CEC) and in the

evangelical *European Lausanne Committee* (ELC). This creative reflection process included most ecclesiastical traditions and provided a number of starting points and substantial stepping stones which I interpret here in form of *three contextual-missiontheological models* towards a missionary theology for Europe. Taking a start from there I try to delineate *seven basic elements* for further missiological discussion about contemporary Europe.²

1. „The Church is the Soul of Europe” – an ecclesiocentric-inculturational model

The Catholic supported polish worker's union “Solidarność” caused the first cracks in the hitherto monolithic communist Eastern Europe. A year earlier Polish Pope John Paul II. had initiated his career in Poland by creating and promoting a new concept: the *New Evangelization of Europe*.³ Jaques Delors, former president of the EU-Council, picked up on this: „We have to give a soul to Europe”. Ten years later, when the com-

munist system in the East had collapsed and western Europe did not have much to offer – apart from economic concepts – it became ever clearer: the new “House of Europe” needed foundational values. “New evangelization” consequently turned into the central topic at the Symposia of the catholic European Council of Bishops (CCEE) during the 1980s, leading up to the “Special Synod of Bishops on Europe” in Rom 1991.⁴

The centre of John Paul II’s vision is the inculturation of gospel values in present day Europe, linking up with its Catholic-Christian past and thus forming a new creative synthesis between the Gospel and European culture for the future. Just like the early greek Euro-missionaries Methodius and Cyril among the Slavic people (about 863 AD) „created forms and styles of Gospel-Incarnation in the cultural and social texture and in the soul of ethnic-European groups in the past”, so the Church today “needs to find a new creative synthesis between the Gospel and life in the special situation in which Europe finds itself today”.⁵ The basis of this inculturation is Europe’s past christianization: „Es sind die Kirchen, die Europa in seinen ersten Anfängen aus der Taufe gehoben haben“⁶. This is interpreted in terms of sacramental and covenantal theology: even present-day Europe continues therefore „under the sacramental sign of its covenant with God”⁷. European history, too, is interpreted from a Catholic theological point of view: medieval Catholic Europe is pictured as the “seamless coat of Christ” (John 19:23), which was torn into pieces first by the break with the Eastern Orthodox, then by the “so called Protestant Reformation” and finally by secularist atheism⁸. The goal of New Evangelization therefore is to recapture the reality of the one Church being the “Soul” of one mystical Europe. In Santiago de Compostela the Pope expressed it so:

„Ich, Johannes Paul, ... rufe dir, altes Europa, voller Liebe zu: Finde wieder zu dir selbst! Sei wieder du selbst! Besinne dich auf deinen Ursprung! Belebe deine Wurzeln wieder! Beginne wieder deine echten Werte zu leben, die deine Geschichte ruhmreich gemacht haben, und mach deine Gegenwart in anderen Kontinenten segensreich. ... Noch immer kannst du Leuchtturm der Zivilisation und Anreiz zum Fortschritt für die Welt sein. Die anderen Kontinente blicken zu dir hin und erhoffen von dir die Antwort des Jakobus zu hören, die er Christus gab: ‘Ich kann es’“⁹.

Three ways of missionary involvement spring from this vision. The first is *socio-ethical involvement* on the various political and cultural platforms and levels of European society. *Sacramental-spiritual renewal* forms the second way and is exemplified in Germany by the charismatically influenced group „Credo. Katholisches Werk für Glaubenserneuerung und Evangelisierung e.V“. This group offers courses on the Christian faith and aims at founding “small apostolic communities and house churches as witnesses to the Gospel within the Church in a continuing evangelization process that finally also extends to people outside the Church”¹⁰. A third way of missionary involvement consists of *ecumenical and interreligious dialogue* in order to reestablish the “seamless coat of Christ” which in the last analysis is also a picture for the Church’s exclusive soteriological inclusivism: the full truth of Christ can only be found in the catholic “mother-church”¹¹.

This official view is not shared by all within the Church. Catholic theologian Otmar Fuchs criticizes it¹²: „Im Begriff der Neuevangelisierung Europas wird ein Verhältnis von Kirche auf der einen und Gesellschaft, Kultur und Welt auf der anderen Seite vorausgesetzt, das spätestens seit dem Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzil gründlich zu verabschieden ist. Die Rede von der Neuevangelisierung Europas suggeriert eine evangelisierte Kirche, die jetzt endlich auch wieder das ach so säkularisierte Europa zum Glauben führen soll. Dabei habe die Kirche was Europa fehlt“¹³. Contrasting this Fuchs pleads that Evangelization should not only hope that “die Fernstehenden wieder in die Kirchenbereiche hineinkommen, sondern daß sie da, wo sie jetzt sind und wahrscheinlich auch bleiben werden, in ihrer dortigen und eigenen Fähigkeit zur Hoffnung und zur Menschlichkeit, angetroffen und aufgebaut werden”¹⁴.

2. „Discovering God in Europe“ – a cosmocentric-liberational model

A very similar critical view of the roman catholic model is represented by the *Conference of European Churches* (CEC) – the WCC-related forum of Protestant and Orthodox churches in Europe. Nevertheless it was a mutual conference with the catholic Bishops of Europe in 1984 in Rivas del Garda/Italy, where CEC first turned its attention to the topic of mission in Europe. The following full assembly in 1986 Stirling/Scotland resolved: „dem Thema ‘Die Mission der Kirchen in einem

säkularisierten Europa' für die nächste Periode Priorität zu geben. ... Die europäischen Kirchen schulden den Kirchen anderer Kontinente, die sie selbst einst evangelisiert haben, diese Konzentration auf die Mission im eigenen Kontinent¹⁵.

Here "New Evangelization" turns into "Mission in secularized Europe". Different aspects of this mission are studied in succeeding consultations in Les Geneveys, Switzerland in 1987 on „Secularization“, in Sigunta, Sweden in 1988 on „Bible and Mission“ and in Kolymari, Crete, in 1993 on „Practical Aspects“.¹⁶

The model which emerged from these conferences represents almost a reversal of the ecclesiocentric concept. The church is not the soul of Europe. Europe does not need such a soul, since the *missio Dei* is directly taking place in all Europeans and in all of European society. The centre of this model comprises a synthesis of various theological concepts: the orthodox *theosis*-theology and *kosmos*-christology which asserts that with the coming of Christ a cosmic process of mystical and spiritual transformation ("God-becoming") of all creation was inaugurated.¹⁷ This is combined with Paul Tillich's interpretation of the justification of modern doubt and despair: „Dennoch bejaht, bejaht durch das, was größer ist als Du, und dessen Namen Du nicht kennst“.¹⁸ In this way Europe und the European experience itself is the holy ground, the sacrament, where God and Man meet.

Added to this one finds a liberation-theological streak in this model. God's salvation in Europe is recognized wherever liberation and *shalom*¹⁹ are realized. Salvation-historically especially the European Enlightenment is interpreted as such a period where Europeans were liberated from the dogmatic pressures of ecclesiastic inculturations. Mission in Europe therefore is not the returning to the Church, but the departure from any status quo, the opening up of the churches to the Holy Spirit's work in the lives of secular and religious Europeans. Dialogue is the way of this discovery of God's presence in secular people, modern artists, children, ethnic minorities and even criminals. As a practical example for this model the CEC-consultation in Crete 1991 describes the work of the ecumenical mission team in Milton Keynes, England. Its members spend a lot of time in the city to discover the hopes and fears of people there and together with them find hopeful ways into the future.

Mission in this sense can also comprise a more

radical theological openness. Elizabeth Templeton, a Scottish theologian, affirmed in Les Geneveys: „Jede Auslegung der Sendung der Kirchen in Europa [muss] sich zunächst einmal von dem de-facto-Anspruch befreien ..., Träger des Evangeliums zu sein. Vielleicht müssen wir akzeptieren, daß das Evangelium zu uns getragen wird, ... zum Teil aus unserer eigenen säkularisierten Kultur und zum Teil von einigen ... Kirchen in Osteuropa, die zusammen mit marxistischen Partnern begonnen haben, das menschliche Schicksal gemeinsam zu erforschen“²⁰.

Similar perspectives were recently formulated by mission historian W. Ustorf, Birmingham. He pleaded for a postchristian European renewal of Christology from a psychodynamic perspective (i.e. psychological well-being as a christological interpretative category), in which not only the dark sides of mission history, but also the shadow sides of Jesus Christ himself (chaotic, disintegrative, disturbed, guilty) should be reflected upon²¹: „It seems that the disestablishment of Jesus Christ is generating (for European Christians) new space to inherit the treasures of other religions ... and to overcome the heritage of anxiety and aggressiveness. This would alter very much the format and structure of Christian mission ... to a new form of a composite, bireligious, or plurireligious awareness, opening the possibility for Christians to convert to Buddhism or Islam, for example, or for Buddhists or Muslims to convert to Christianity. ... Christianity once disestablished, is not about itself and not about christianizing the world. It is about sharing the fullness of life on this earth, about love and reconciliation, community and peace, justice and service. ... To risk a dangerous formulation: a disestablished Christian spirituality would have failed if it were to lead us to ‚God‘; This missionary spirituality would lead us to our fellow human beings“²².

Not everyone at the CEC-Consultations went along these lines. Alternative viewpoints were expressed. In Sigunta Rumanian theologian Dimitru Popescu affirmed a New Testament based Christology "from above" as basis of a truly liberating mission in Europe²³. British missiologist H. D. Beeby (in keeping with L. Newbigin's critique) questioned if not „die sogenannte ‚Aufklärung‘ ... der Beginn eines neuen finsternen Zeitalters für das öffentliche Leben war“, die „Christus aus dem öffentlichen Bereich entfernte und ihn in die private Sphäre verwies“?²⁴ Raymond Fung, then Secretary of Evangelism of the WCC, emphasized

the “missionary *koinonia*” in the fellowship of the triune God as the basis for mission in Europe which consists of the crossing of borders as well as of “active and patient waiting” for lost European sons to experience the love of the Father.²⁵

3. „Communicating Christ to Europeans” – a bibliocentric–communicational model

Close to these latter views we find the model which emerged during the conferences of the *European Lausanne Committee* (ELC) in Stuttgart 1988, Manila 1989 und Bad Boll 1992.²⁶ The centre of the Lausanne missiological vision for Europe is the biblical and communal witness of Jesus Christ and a level-headed analysis of European realities: „The only way to be delivered from Europessimism is to catch a fresh vision of Christ!”²⁷ The ELC is convinced that Christ can neither be directly “discovered” in European history nor be bound to a mystical Catholic-European connection. Only the historically and theologically authentic witness of the NT together with the present work of the Holy Spirit enables Europeans of all times and places to personally encounter Jesus Christ as their Liberator and the Lord of his church – with transforming consequences for European culture and society.

Europe then is interpreted in the creative tension between creation and sin, grace and judgement. European culture therefore offers “bridges” as well as “barriers” to the Gospel:²⁸ the European Union, the legacies of State-Churchdom, postchristian secularity, postmodern religiosity, postmarxist neopaganism and a multicultural society in Europa are both chance and challenge.²⁹ The goal of mission in Europe is described not so much in terms of Christian cultural and political renewal – although the relevance of the Gospel as “Public Truth” (L. Newbigin) was not at all overlooked.³⁰ But the emphasis is on crossing cultural, social or religious barriers to reach Europeans who do not know the biblical message of Jesus Christ and to give them a holistic witness of the Gospel through „the proclamation and the demonstration of the love of God in Jesus Christ”³¹. Basic for this task is the connection between “local church” and “neighbourhood”. The local church understood as „all believers in that place” is the plausibility structure for evangelistic witness: „we will give ourselves in a servant spirit to meet material, spiritual ... and cultural needs of as many people as possible in our neighbourhoods”³². The question remained open, as to whether the basic framework for mis-

sion in Europe should be seen in the state-church parochial structures or in independent mission and church planting movements. In spite of differing positions in this respect, both sides affirmed the necessity of acknowledging each other. The ELC therefore affirms ecclesiological plurality within the unity of the Gospel. This did not explicitly extend to evangelically oriented Eastern Orthodox or Roman-Catholic groups, but Janis Vanags, today Archbishop of the Lutheran Church in Lithuania, affirmed the reality of “gospel true Eastern Orthodox and Catholic Churches” in Bad Boll 1992.

In Manila 1989 Os Guinness pointed to the deep spiritual challenge of mission in Europe: “The ultimate factor in the church’s engagement with modernity is the church’s engagement with God”³³. Therefore, according to the ELC conviction, the renewal of biblical spirituality (fellowship with the biblically revealed missionary triune God) forms the beating heart of missiological reflection and involvement in Europe today.

4. Common ground and grassroots-mission

Stepping back and looking at the whole picture of the ecumenical reflection process between 1979 and 1992 a number of converging and diverging developments can be observed. *First*, in all three models mission is no longer seen as the exotic activity of marginal pietistic groups and of marginal meaning for Europe today, but as an essential task for the whole Church in the middle of the contemporary European endeavour. Yet, while the eclipse of mission theology for Europe seems to be over, the discussion on what this mission means is still going on. *Second*, the necessity of a renewed inculturation of the Gospel within the European culture is emphasized most strongly in the Roman-Catholic and the Evangelical models: Europe does need a “soul” of biblically grounded christian values, which need to be lived out and communicated on the personal and the political level. *Third*, the perspective that personal Christian conversion is central for mission in Europe – based on the observation that most Europeans are “sacramentalized but not evangelized”³⁴ – is shared by Catholics and Evangelicals. But here also the diverging element shows: whereas Catholics interpret the sacrament of baptism as the basic conversion and understand the task of “Re-Evangelization” as calling Europeans to a “re-conversion” in the sense of a return to baptismal grace³⁵ (for

Catholics) and to the Catholic "mother church" (for non-Catholics), Evangelicals do reject the idea that baptism in itself is salvific and even more, that conversion needs to lead to the Roman Catholic Church. Evangelicals therefore understand mission among nominal Roman-Catholics (and Protestants and Eastern Orthodox) in Europe as legitimate, whereas Catholics object to this as proselytizing, when it is done outside of Catholic parochial structures. Here soteriological-ecclesiological concepts have not really approximated since the publication of the *Evangelical-Roman-Catholic Dialogue on Mission* (ERCDOM) in 1987.³⁶ *Fourth*, the recognition that mission in Europe also includes the transformation of the churches themselves in order to communicate the Gospel contextually is shared by the cosmocentric and the bibliocentric models. Here the Protestant *ecclesia semper reformanda* becomes apparent, which sees the churches as the first addressees of the *missio Dei* in Europe. While the Evangelical contextual model gives prominence to the Bible as normative factor (*norma normans*) in this transformational process, the KEK-Model tends to see European society in its diversity as the main "agent of change" for the churches' mission. The ecclesiocentric Roman-Catholic model is more intransigent and finds it more difficult to change and renew itself, since it does not acknowledge any authority outside the normative ecclesiastical teaching tradition.³⁷ *Fifth*, human liberation and anthropologically holistic aspects of mission in Europe are emphasized by all three models. The bibliocentric model accentuates the theological dimension of liberation from guilt before the holy God and from the destructive power of personal sin, and together with the ecclesiocentric model stresses the biblical dignity of the human being and the consequences this has for ethical decisions in Europe. The cosmocentric model tends to emphasize questions of political injustice and ecological abuse and to interpret liberation as personal freedom from any biblical, ecclesiastical, societal or psychological regimentation and as a constant process of disestablishment. *Sixth*, spirituality and community as the centre of mission in Europe are affirmed by all three models. Whereas the cosmocentric model seems inclined to borrow from Eastern Orthodox liturgical spirituality, the ecclesiocentric model can look back on a rich spiritual tradition in its diverse monastic and lay renewal movements. The Evangelical model calls special attention to a biblical spirituality informed by the "apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:

42) lived out in the Holy Spirit's power in all of life in a constant attitude of prayer, worship and dependence on God. Here traditional Reformed, Evangelical and Charismatic traditions blend.

So we have found some common ground for mission in Europe and we should build on this ground wherever possible. But in view of the clearly diverging tendencies on basic theological issues of mission in Europe, it does not seem reasonable to seek institutional missionary alliances without discussing foundational diverging tendencies on the basis of the Bible, which must always remain the classic common ground for Christian mission and missionary hermeneutics. But we do not have to wait for institutional church alliances. Mission in sacramentalized and secularized Europe has always been a Bible- and community-based cross-denominational grassroots-endeavour (with transformational effects on the wider European culture) since the Pietists started their house-church bible-studies in the 17th century and the Evangelical Awakenings swept across Europe in the 18th and 19th centuries.³⁸ Today a new Bible- and community-based missiontheological consensus seems to be building up between diverse *local churches and missionary communities* across the older denominations and in new independent church-planting movements.³⁹ The Hope-for-Europe-Network initiated in 1994 by the European Evangelical Alliance together with the European Lausanne Committee, Youth with a Mission and other mission organisations is a courageous attempt to express, encourage and connect this new and often complex "unity in diversity" in mission in Europe.⁴⁰ Having this in mind I will try to delineate some basic elements which seem to be of importance for further missiological discussion on contemporary Europe from an evangelical perspective.

5. Elements for missiological reflection on Europe

5.1. God is (not) a European

Hope for and mission in Europe is based on the fact that God became Man in Jesus Christ, King of Israel and Saviour of Humankind for everyone on earth including Europeans. His Holy Spirit is still active in Europe "to convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgement" (John 16:8) and to cause Europeans to turn around and follow Jesus Christ everywhere in European culture. But if European (mission) the-

ologies continue to undermine this biblical *missio Dei* substituting it by a *missio Europae* and submitting the holy and missionary text of the Bible to European ecclesiastical or European societal norms (and thus confusing text and context), they bereave themselves of the hope which comes from the fact that God is not a European, but the living and almighty "God, who does not give us a nebulous something, but concrete hope in his promises in writing"⁴¹. Therefore, the Bible remains the classic and creative criterion for mission and missiological interpretation in Europe. The ELK has rightly emphasized this.

5.2. Europeans are (not) atheistic

Atheism is a European phenomenon. But are Europeans really a-theistic? Are they really without God or without gods? European history is religious history, and contemporary Europe finds Europeans still very religious: searching for and running from the Living God at the same time. Viewed from a theological perspective, European history shows many traces of God's grace. Pope John Paul II. was right when he stated that Europe "cannot give up Christianity like a fellow-traveler that it was alienated from, as little as man can give up the foundations of his life and hope without precipitating himself into a dramatic crisis"⁴². Not only medieval and Reformation Europe but also Enlightenment and modern secular Europe have been deeply influenced by biblical-Christian values like the dignity and intrinsic value of human life, the personhood of man and woman, human responsibility and freedom, the value of truth and the reality of love and community etc. At the same time God's judgement and human atrocities (sometimes in the abused name of Christ) become apparent in European history: "missionary" and religious wars by Christian powers, the inquisition and persecution of heretics and dissenters by the churches – Catholic, Protestant and Eastern Orthodox –, bloody revolutions, two World Wars, civil wars in Spain and the former Yugoslavia, the Holocaust in nationalist Germany, mass murder and the Gulag Archipelago in communist Russia, the ongoing abortion of the unborn, and the abolition of God's creation and life order in the consumerist postmodern Europe.

In the light of their history most Europeans are neither atheistic nor pagan, but postchristian in the double sense, that they are culturally deeply influenced by Christianity while at the same time they are trying to leave it behind as a non-option

for their personal lives. For some on their search for God cultural postchristianity has become an entry point for a real personal experience with Christ himself. But many in their disappointment with historical and institutional Christianity and on their run from the Living God have turned polytheistic with a remaining notion of a nebulous *high* God: „The majority of our population has a vague belief in God, but it is irrelevant to daily life. If one were to ask a totally unchurched und untaught European what they thought God was like, they would be baffled and confess that they had no idea. They might finally suggest... that God is good and great,... they would hope, when they die all will be well“.⁴³ Closer to their daily lives are the *lower* Gods of money, success, football, fitness and health, cars and entertainment media, trendy forms of buddhism and the fascination of the old northern or celtic deities⁴⁴ and the *demons* of pornography, child abuse, ritual violence, satanist worship, racism, abortion, corruption etc.. And all of these seem to be part of the pan-European religion of „Ego-Theism“ (David Flacke)⁴⁵. Against the backdrop of this religious European landscape, Islam is gaining attraction among disillusioned postchristian Europeans, while at the same time it is causing fears as a threat to European democracy based on the Christian tension between freedom of religious conviction and responsibility before the biblical God.

While many Europeans do not reckon with the Living God, God does not let Europeans go. In this respect Leonardo Boff was right, when he said, that „God comes before the missionary“.⁴⁶ God keeps opening doors, creating points of entry and drawing Europeans to himself – in order that his missionary people may cross the frontiers of postchristian isolation, listen, ask questions, take real interest and tell the true and saving story of Jesus Christ with their words and lives⁴⁷.

5.3. Christian community gives plausibility to the Gospel in Europe

Popular opinion on postmodern Europe perpetuates the myth that Europeans are no longer interested in truth⁴⁸. Truth however seems to be that the search for truth is hidden within the search for identity, personal meaningfulness and community. Europeans are first looking for real relationships and then for truth that can carry these relationships.⁴⁹ Connected to this is the postmodern longing for immediate and tangible emotional, visual and physical experience. The Protestant-Reformed

and Evangelical tradition in contrast emphasize the past and the future, the universal and the spiritual to the effect that the present sometimes remains rather pale. It seems that Eastern-Orthodox and Roman-Catholic traditions have to offer more in this respect. But is a colourful and mystical liturgy that appeals to the postmodern sensibility for experience and mystery really enough? Is not the *communio sanctorum*, the visible local community of the Kingdom of God consisting of women, men and children trusting and following Jesus Christ in their daily lives, the true plausibility structure (Peter L. Berger) for mission and a network of hope in the geographies, (sub)-cultures and denominations of Europe? Local churches centred on Jesus Christ and the Bible and woven into the web of European culture will function as a *semeion* (Greek: sign, symbol) being part of, contrasting and transforming European culture while pointing to the hope found in the sure promises of God. "Europeans need Christian friends, that can show them how the Gospel changes their lives. The more the hermeneutical bridge between the biblical text and the European context is breaking down, the more Europeans must 'see' the meaning of the Gospel in the lives of Christians."⁵⁰ L. Newbigin was right: mission in the modern culture is "not the product of some human heroism, but a spontaneous overflow of worshipping communities into the dried out deserts of a secularized world".⁵¹

5.4. Telling the true story of Jesus Christ in Europe

Community as plausibility structure does not replace the verbal communication of the Gospel. „This generation will become Christians initially through the heart or just become converted to the Christian community. However, we need to make sure they are converted not only to the community but to the King of the community, Jesus Christ“⁵². Mission in Europe therefore is the challenge to tell Europeans the biblical story of the Living God and his Son. The less people know this true and transforming story, the more evangelism needs to be narrative and not immediately calling for decisions.⁵³ In a Europe filled with imaginary media-stories it is decisive that the biblical story is true as well as life-transforming. Here it becomes apparent how damaging it would be to replace biblical Christology with a postchristian European Christology according to W. Ustorf. Whereas such a European Christ "whose very life and teaching

also had a dark, a shadow side", who was sometimes "chaotic", "confused", "guilty"⁵⁴ could serve us as a projected persona of identification, he could not lead us out of the European predicament between greedy *hybris* on the one and fearful meaninglessness on the other hand. "European Christs" (of whatever psychological or ideological colour) will always remain well-meant, but erroneous human stories based neither on historical nor on theological truth. The true biblical story of Jesus Christ shows that the solidarity of Jesus Christ with the sinner is expressed in the deepest way in his atoning death on the cross where he indeed took all shadows and all guilt upon himself as the spotless lamb of God. This is real good news for Europeans, who need to encounter the truth about themselves and discover the truth of Jesus Christ that will set them free (John 8:36).

5.5. A soul for Europe: pluralism does not preserve plurality

Europe indeed is in need of a "soul" in the form of Christian values as the Roman Catholic and the Evangelical models have emphasized. This does not really contradict the KEK-accentuation of a multicultural and secular society, but rather seems to be a requirement for it. In the last analysis I am convinced that only the Judeo-Christian view of Man (and a biblical view of God) is able to form the foundation for plurality and peace in European society.⁵⁵ Ideological absolute pluralism that rejects the expression of biblical convictions as public truth is philosophically self-destructive and seems to contribute more to indifference and romantic views of e.g. Islam or Lamaistic Buddhism (both of which reject the idea of religious freedom) than to impede real intolerance. Johann Bouman, former professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Marburg in Germany, has reminded us that „multikulturelle Gesellschaft ... auch ein psychologisches Problem [ist]. Die Psychologie hat für die Gesellschaft die sog. *primary group* festgestellt. Dies bedeutet, daß das Hauptinteresse der Menschen sich auf die unmittelbare vernunft- und gefühlsmäßige Nachbarschaft-Familie-Freunde-Partei-Volksgenossen, Kirche etc ausrichtet. ... je größer der Abstand in Zeit, Raum, Gefühl oder Identität wird, in demselben Maße wird das Interesse an den anderen Menschen abnehmen. Deswegen hat die Ethik die Aufgabe, dafür zu sorgen, daß die Entfernung nicht in Feindschaft und Gewalt ausartet. Genau hier liegt der Aufgabenbereich für den christlichen Glauben und dessen

Verkündigung. Denn gegenüber der beschränkten Ethik der primary group steht die Botschaft des Evangeliums: Joh. 3,16.⁵⁶

How a "Christian soul" relates to a relative secularity of the state, the separation of state and church and the safeguarding of religious freedom, is a complex question that demands serious and realistic reflection from Christians in politics. The Christian churches should stand for a biblical theology and worldview as basis for a political order that safeguards freedom of conscience and responsibility. At the same time every Christian should witness the love and truth of Jesus Christ in a personal way to the adherents of traditional and new religions and European pseudo-religions. For the real decisions about a "Christian soul" for Europe are not made in the preambles of constitutions (although we should not underestimate the significance of such public signs), but in the hearts, minds and lives of European women and men, in their families and relationships.

5.6. World mission in Europe

Mission in Europe is part of God's world mission. But the non-western missionary perspective on Europe was generally underestimated at the above described conferences: the speakers came almost exclusively from Europe and North America. Nevertheless in Stuttgart 1988 Patrick Johnstone, editor of *Operation World*, included the explosive growth of Evangelical Churches in the Third World into his vision for Europe. He saw it as an encouragement for mission in Europe: „God has not finished with our continent. God can step in again to reveal his power!“⁵⁷ Participating in God's world mission will *encourage* mission in Europe. And it will also *instruct* mission in Europe, since we can learn from the missiological experiences of churches in the non-western world that are grappling with multi-religious challenges and sometimes anti-Christian persecution.⁵⁸ European missionaries that have worked in other cultures will also have a lot to contribute to the missiological challenge in Europe. Especially since world mission has long come to Europe. Africans, Asians, Arabs, Latin-americans are living with us in our neighbourhoods and working with us in the marketplace. Many of them have never had the chance to hear the Gospel in their home countries. Some of them are coming as mature Christians and missionaries to reach out (mostly) to ethnic minorities in Europe and to awaken the European churches to resume their missionary

task. In Germany, one of the biggest neglected challenges is to reach the large Turkish minority with the love, truth and fellowship of Jesus Christ. There are rural communities with up to 40% Turks which are practically ignored by the local Christian churches. Sharing the love and Gospel of Christ with them in small and practical ways will also be an important contribution to mutual understanding and integration and may even prevent many peaceful and European acculturated Muslims from becoming part of the religious war promoted by a small minority of radical Muslims.⁵⁹

5.7. Praying in and for Europe

Mission in Europe is a spiritual challenge which transcends human strategic thinking and planning. Whereas the heart of contemporary European culture is suffocated by the "deliberate locking-out of genuine transcendence", mission in Europe can only rely on God's Word and Spirit to open up this "iron cage" (M. Weber), this "world without windows" (P. Berger). God's Word and Spirit "stand higher than history, a judgement that is irreducible to any generation and culture. Which is why, when God speaks, not even the worst or best of our hermeneutics can hold him down"⁶⁰. The centre of mission in Europe therefore is found in a missionary community praying the prayer of Moses: „Show me your glory“ (Exodus 33:18). „In that prayer, we have our ultimate answer to modernity... When 'God is dead' for a nation, a church, a movement, or an individual, a weightlessness results for which there is only one remedy – ultimate reality, the glory of God refilling them as the waters fill the sea“⁶¹. Hope for Europe comes from the sovereign Living God and through people that count on him in their daily lives and relationships - everywhere in Europe.

„It is one of the most hopeful signs for Europe that the motivation for prayer and the participation in prayer movements of all kinds is rising among European Christians . . . Maybe this is a result of the many prayers of African, Asian and Latin-american Christians for Europe.“⁶²

Notes

- 1 Francis Sunderaraj, General Secretary of the *Evangelical Fellowship of India*, affirms this point of view. In his article „What I see through the 10/40 Window“ he points to strongly rooted missionary churches in non-western countries like India and

- „spiritually bankrupt churches, total indifference to Christ and the principles of the kingdom, moral degradation and ever increasing adherence to the gods of secular humanism, materialism and tribalization and to movements such as New Age in the countries of the western world“, *Evangelical World: WEF Newsletter*, 1995: 7. L. Newbigin's missionary analysis of western culture concludes the same: „The end result is not – as we imagined 25 years ago – a secular society, a society which has no public beliefs but is a kind of neutral world in which we can all freely pursue our self-chosen purposes What we have is ... a pagan society whose public life is ruled by beliefs which are false“. In: „Can the West be Converted?“ *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 11 (1/1987): 2-7:7.
- 2 This article is based on my doctoral dissertation (Univ. of South Africa, 1999) on the ecumenical debate on Contextual Mission and New Evangelization in the emerging New Europe between 1979 and 1992. The dissertation was written and published in German under the title: *Die Neuevangelisierung Europas. Missionstheologien im europäischen Kontext* (Gießen/Basel: Brunnen TVG 2002, 397pp).
 - 3 „Wir erhielten ein Zeichen, dass an der Schwelle eines neuen Jahrtausends das Evangelium neu eingeht. Eine Neu-Evangelisierung hat begonnen, als ob es sich um eine Zweit-Evangelisierung handelte, auch wenn es sich in Wirklichkeit immer um dieselbe handelt.“ Johannes Paul II., „...mag sich auch die Welt verändern“, Predigt in der Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche von Mogila am 9.6.1979“, *Predigten und Ansprachen von Papst Johannes Paul II. bei seiner Pilgerfahrt durch Polen*, Verlautbarungen des Apostolischen Stuhls 10, hg.v.Sekr. d. Deutschen Bischofskonferenz, Bonn, 1979, p. 102 – 106. Hier zit. nach G. Collet, „Ein noch nicht ganz ausgeträumter Traum?“ *Missionstheologische Anmerkungen zur Neuevangelisierung Europas*, *Wege der Theologie an der Schwelle zum dritten Jahrtausend*. FS für Hans Waldenfels, hg. v. G. Riße u.a., Paderborn: Bonifatius, 1996, p. 805-822: 810.
 - 4 *Damit wir Zeugen Christi sind, der uns befreit hat. Erklärung der Bischofs-Sondersynode für Europa*. Verlautbarungen des Apostolischen Stuhls 103, hg. v. Sekretariat der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz, Bonn, 13. Dezember 1991.
 - 5 John Paul II., „Ansprache ...“ (CCEE-Symposium, 11. Oktober 1985), *Die europäischen Bischöfe und die Neu-Evangelisierung Europas*, *Stimmen der Weltkirche, Europa* (SdW) 32, hg. v. Sekretariat der DBK/CCEE Sekretariat, Bonn/ St. Gallen, Oktober 1991, p. 237-247: 238. Transl. FW.
 - 6 „Die Krise der europäischen Kultur ist die Krise der christlichen Kultur“, *Ansprache auf dem CCEE-Symposium*, 5. Oktober 1982, *Die europäischen Bischöfe und die Neu-Evangelisierung Europas*, *Stimmen der Weltkirche* (SdW) 32, hg. v. Sekretariat der DBK/CCEE Sekretariat, Bonn/ St. Gallen, Oktober 1991, p. 128-133: 128.
 - 7 Ibid. p. 132.
 - 8 „Brief von Johannes Paul II. an die Präsidenten der europäischen Bischofskonferenzen, *Die europäischen Bischöfe und die Neu-Evangelisierung Europas*, p. 282-285.
 - 9 Zit. bei G. Collet, „Ein noch nicht ganz ausgeträumter Traum?“ *Missionstheologische Anmerkungen zur Neuevangelisierung Europas*, a.a. O., p. 813.
 - 10 H. Mühlen, *Neu mit Gott: Einübung in christliches Leben und Zeugnis* (Handbuch der Neuevangelisierung), Freiburg/Basel/Wien, 1990, p. 9.
 - 11 Johannes Paul II., „Ansprache vor dem CCEE-Symposium, 11. Oktober 1985“, *Die europäischen Bischöfe und die Neu-Evangelisierung Europas*, S. 237-247: 247. Comp.: F. Walldorf, „Umstrittene Evangelisation – Eine Analyse der gegenwärtigen Diskussion“, *Evangelisation im Gegenwind: Zur Theologie und Praxis der Glaubensverkündigung in der säkularen Gesellschaft*, hg. v. H. Klement, Gießen: TVG Brunnen, 2002, S. 124-148.
 - 12 Similar perspectives within the RC tradition are held by e.g. K. Koch, „Neuevangelisierung im Missionskontinent Europa, Chancen und Versuchungen“, *Katechetische Blätter* 118 (1993/ 2): 98-112; G. Collet, „Ein noch nicht ganz ausgeträumter Traum?“ *Missionstheologische Anmerkungen zur Neuevangelisierung Europas*, *Wege der Theologie an der Schwelle zum dritten Jahrtausend*. FS für Hans Waldenfels, hg. v. G. Riße u.a., Paderborn: Bonifatius, S. 805-822 et al.
 - 13 cit. in C. Thiede, *Bischöfe – kollegial für Europa. CCEE im Dienst einer sozialtheologisch konkretisierten Evangelisierung*. Schriften des Instituts für christliche Sozialwissenschaften, Bd. 22, Münster: Aschendorff, 1991, S. 141.
 - 14 O. Fuchs, „Was ist Neuevangelisierung?“, in: *Stimmen der Zeit*, 210. Bd. (1992): 465-473:471.
 - 15 KEK (Hg.), *Begegnung in Stirling: Bericht der X. Vollversammlung der KEK 4.-11. September 1986* Universität Stirling, Schottland, Genf: KEK, 1986, S. 107.
 - 16 For a detailed description of these consultations see F. Walldorf, *Die Neuevangelisierung Europas*, comp. Footnote 2.
 - 17 The Romanian theologian Ion Bria said in Les Geneveys: „Als das Wort (Logos) Gottes Fleisch wurde ..., hat es die gesamte Schöpfung aufgenommen, um die gefallene Welt zu erneuern und zum Reich Gottes zu verwandeln. Das ganze Universum (oikumene) wird durch das lebendige Opfer des historischen Jesus Christus, des menschengewordenen Gottessohnes, durch den alle Dinge entstanden sind ... erlöst. Seine Heilsökonomie ... hat eine historische Realität mit kosmischer Reichweite. ... Von

- daher hat die östliche Theologie von der direkten vergöttlichenden Begegnung zwischen Gott und Mensch (theosis) und von der Welt als 'Sakrament' gesprochen". *Die Mission der Kirchen in einem säkularisierten Europa: Mission und Säkularisation. Bericht der Studienkonsultation der KEK*, 16. – 20. November 1987, Les Geneveys-sur-Coffrane, Schweiz. Genf: KEK, S. 37-51: 42
- 18 P. Tillich, zit. bei H. Zahrnt, *Die Sache mit Gott*, München, 1980: 376.
 - 19 In this sense J.C. Hoekendijk's concept of *shalom*-salvation can be seen as a precursor of liberation theological concepts. Cp. B. Hoedemaker, „The Legacy of J.C. Hoekendijk“, *IBMR* 19 No. 4 (Oct 1995) : 166ff.
 - 20 E. Templeton, „Mission und Säkularisation“, *Die Mission der Kirchen in einem säkularisierten Europa: Mission und Säkularisation. Bericht der Studienkonsultation der KEK*, 16. – 20. November 1987, Les Geneveys-sur-Coffrane, Schweiz. Genf: KEK, S. 53-58: 55.
 - 21 W. Ustorf, „The Emerging Christ of Post-Christian Europe“, *A Scandalous Prophet: The Way of Mission after Newbigin*, ed. T. Foust, et al, Grand Rapids, 2001, p. 141.
 - 22 Ibid. p.144.
 - 23 „Zwei christologische Betrachtungsweisen der Mission“, *Die Mission der Kirchen in einem säkularisierten Europa: Biblische Aspekte der Mission. Bericht der Studienkonsultation der KEK*, 2.-6. Mai 1988 in Sigunta, Schweden.. Genf: KEK, 1989, S. 17-19.
 - 24 „Bibelarbeit über Kolosser 1,19-20“, *ibid.*, S. 37-44.
 - 25 „Bibelarbeit über Joh. 13,34-35“, *ibid.* S. 45ff.
 - 26 For detailed descriptions of these conferences and unpublished resource materials see F. Walldorf, *Die Neuevangelisierung Europas*, S. 193ff.
 - 27 J. Stott, „Christ and Mission: keynote address“, *European Leadership Conference on World Evangelization. Report and written papers. Stuttgart 1988*. MARC Monograph 20. Bromley, Kent, p. 9-10: 10. Cp. „The Bad Boll Commitment (BBC)“, *World Evangelization* (Jan/1993): 6-7:7.
 - 28 Cp. London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, „Barriers and Bridges to the Gospel in Europe and how to exploit them“, *European Leadership Conference on World Evangelization. Report and written papers. Stuttgart 1988*. MARC Monograph 20. Bromley, Kent, p. 32-36
 - 29 Cp. B. Knieß, „Die Chancen der europäischen Integration für die Mission“, *Evangelikale Missiologie* 16 (2000): 122-133.
 - 30 „The Bad Boll Commitment“ (BBC), *World Evangelization* (Jan/1993): 6-7:7. Vgl. auch den Beitrag des norwegischen Ministerpräsidenten und evangelikalen Christen Kjell Magne Bondevik in Bad Boll 1992.
 - 31 BBC, S. 6.
 - 32 Ibid.
 - 33 O. Guinness, „Mission Modernity: Seven checkpoints on Mission in the Modern World“, *Faith and Modernity*, hg. v. P. Sampson et al, Oxford: Regnum, 1994, S. 322-351: 351-52.
 - 34 Cardinal B. Hume, „Eröffnungsansprache“, *Die europäischen Bischöfe und die Neu-Evangelisierung Europas...*, 1991, S. 88-99: 92
 - 35 John Paul II., *Enzyklika Redemptoris Missio Seiner Heiligkeit Papst Johannes Paul II. über die fort-dauernde Gültigkeit des missionarischen Auftrages*, 7. Dezember 1990. Verlautbarungen des Apostolischen Stuhls 100, hg. v. Sekretariat der DBK, Bonn, § 46, § 47.
 - 36 J. Stott/ B. Meeking (ed.), *Der Dialog zwischen Evangelikalen und der Römisch-Katholischen Kirche*, Wuppertal: Brockhaus TVG, 1987. Cp. also F. Walldorf, „Umstrittene Evangelisation – Eine Analyse der gegenwärtigen Diskussion“, *Evangelisation im Gegenwind: Zur Theologie und Praxis der Glaubensverkündigung in der säkularen Gesellschaft*, hg. v. H. Klement, Gießen: TVG Brunnen, 2002, S. 124-148.
 - 37 „Vergottet die Kirche ihre eigene Lehrautorität, entleert sie sie, weil sie dann nicht mehr Christi Wort über sich hat, die Quelle, aus der sie gespeist wird. Ordnet sich die Kirche aber der Autorität des Wortes Christi demütig, bescheiden und dankbar unter, will sie nicht ihr eigenes, sondern Christi Wort hören, verkünden, ausführen, so gewinnt sie die Autorität, die ihr Menschen nicht geben können“, Hans Küng, *Die Kirche*, München: Piper, 1992: 288.
 - 38 Cp. H. Lehmann (Hg.), *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung, Rechristianisierung im neuzeitlichen Europa: Bilanz und Perspektiven der Forschung*, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Institutes für Geschichte 130, Göttingen, 1997.
 - 39 E.g. the *Evangelical-Catholic movement* in Ireland which has adopted the *Lausanne Covenant* as their *Magna Carta* and is spreading through renewal communities such as Cursillo, Fokolari, Charismatic and Neo-Catechumenical renewal groups etc. as well as local parochial structures. Cp. P. Monaghan, „What is an Evangelical Catholic“, *Lion & Lamb* (Belfast) No. 14 (Autumn 1997): 11- 14; P. Johnstone (Hg.), *Gebet für die Welt: Handbuch für Weltrevangelisation*, Neuhausen: Hänssler, 1994, S. 335-336.
 - 40 Part of this network is/was the annual *European Round Table* of mission and church-movement leaders in Europe, the *New Europe Forum* and as recent culmination point the Hope.21- *Konsultation* in Budapest from 27.04. – 01.05.2002. For documentation see: www.hfe.org.
 - 41 T. Schirrmacher, *Hoffnung für Europa. 66 Thesen*, Erlangen: VTR, 2002, S. 39 (Transl. FW).

- 42 Johannes Paul II., „Die Krise der europäischen Kultur ist die Krise der christlichen Kultur“ (Ansprache, CCEE-Symposium, 5. Oktober 1982), *Die europäischen Bischöfe und die Neu-Evangelisierung Europas*, Stimmen der Weltkirche (SdW) 32, hg. v. Sekretariat der DBK/CCEE Sekretariat, Bonn/St. Gallen, Oktober 1991, S. 128-133: 130 (Transl. FW).
- 43 M. Goldsmith, *Matthew and Mission: The Gospel Through Jewish Eyes*, Carlisle: Paternoster, 2001, p. 26.
- 44 Vgl. K.-P. Jörns, *Die neuen Gesichter Gottes: Was die Menschen heute wirklich glauben*. München, 1997; T. Luckmann, *Die unsichtbare Religion*. 3. Aufl. Frankfurt, 1996.
- 45 This new term was coined by David Flacke, one of my students in a course at the *Akademie für Mission und Gemeindebau (AMG)* in Gießen.
- 46 L. Boff, *Gott kommt früher als der Missionar. Neu-evangelisierung für eine Kultur des Lebens und der Freiheit*. Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1991.
- 47 Cp. K. Scheffbuch, *Andere verstehen – andere gewinnen*, Neuhausen, 1991.
- 48 Good reasons against this myth are given by James Sire in „Why should anyone believe anything at all“, *Telling The Truth: Evangelizing Postmoderns*, ed. D.A. Carson, Grand Rapids, 2000, S. 93-101.
- 49 Cp. Jim Long, „Generating Hope: A Strategy for Reaching the Postmodern Generation“, *Telling the Truth*, S. 322-335:334.
- 50 K. Tetzlaff, „Persönliche evangelistische Kommunikation mit postmodernen Neuheiden in Deutschland“, Gießen, unveröffentl. wiss. Hausarbeit, 1997, S. 89.
- 51 L. Newbigin, *Den Griechen eine Torheit*, Neukirchen, 1989, S. 132 (Transl. FW).
- 52 Jim Long, „Generating Hope: A Strategy for Reaching the Postmodern Generation“, *ibid.* p. 334.
- 53 Cp. B. Krause, *Auszug aus dem Schneckenhaus*, Neukirchen, 1996, S. 38. The method of „Chronological Bible Teaching“ that T. McIllwain has developed for missionary work among tribal people with no knowledge of Christianity is of high relevance for „narrative“ missionary work in Europe today. Cp. the Eetaaouw-Videos of New Tribes Mission and T. McIllwain, *Building on Firm Foundations*.
- 54 W. Ustorf, „The Emerging Christ of Post-Christian Europe“, *A Scandalous Prophet*, S. 138. 141.
- 55 R. Heue has pointed to this fact at the CEC-Consultation 1987. *Mission und Säkularisation. Bericht der Studienkonsultation der KEK*, 16. – 20. November 1987, Les Geneveys-sur-Coffrane, Schweiz. Genf: KEK, S. 17- 24.
- 56 J. Bouman, „Ethik und Kultur in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft“, *EuroJTh* 4 (1/1995): 79 - 87: 86/87
- 57 „World Evangelization – an attainable objective“, *European Leadership Conference on World Evangelization. Report and written papers*. Stuttgart 1988. MARC Monograph 20. Bromley, Kent, S. 27-32: 27
- 58 See: W. Shenk, „Recasting Theology of Mission: Impulses from the Non-Western World“, *IBMR* 25 (3/2001): 98-106.
- 59 Cp. Udo Ulfkotte, *Der Krieg in unseren Städten: Wie radikale Islamisten Deutschland unterwandern*, Frankfurt/M: Eichborn, 2003.
- 60 O. Guinness, „Mission Modernity: Seven checkpoints on Mission in the Modern World“, *Faith and Modernity*, ed. P. Sampson et al, Oxford: Regnum, 1994, S. 322-351: 349.
- 61 O. Guinness, p. 351.
- 62 T. Schirmacher, *Hoffnung für Europa. 66 Thesen*, Erlangen: VTR, 2002, p. 53 (Transl. FW).

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