

hat, ist es wichtig, in einer europäischen theologischen Zeitschrift auf sein umfangreiches Hauptwerk hinzuweisen, das schon bald nach der ersten Auflage (Nürnberg, 2005) in zweiter Auflage erschienen ist.

Reifler unterrichtet Missiologie am Theologischen Seminar St. Chrischona bei Basel in der Schweiz. Schon während seiner Lehrtätigkeit in Brasilien in den siebziger und achtziger Jahren arbeitete er Lehrbücher für den theologischen Unterricht aus. Reiflers Bücher zeichnen sich dadurch aus, dass sie gut verständlich und dadurch besonders für Undergraduates in Theologie geeignet sind. Er versteht es ausgezeichnet, nicht nur durch seinen Stil, sondern auch durch Vermittlung des einem Anfänger fehlenden Wissens um Hintergründe und Zusammenhänge in ein Thema einzuführen.

Der Prolog fasst auf einer Seite acht Gründe für die Mission zusammen: „Warum in aller Welt Mission?“ (20) Darauf folgt im Einführungsteil eine kurze Einleitung in Geschichte, Aufgabe und Umfang der Missiologie (23-37). Im ersten Teil des Werkes, zugleich dem kürzesten, fasst Reifler das biblische Zeugnis zur Mission und weiteres unter dem Stichwort „Missionstheologie“ zusammen und stellt die Lausanner Bewegung sowie die Ergebnisse ihrer Arbeit vor (41-163).

Der dritte Teil von Reiflers Handbuch ist wesentlich umfangreicher; er beschäftigt sich mit der Mission aus historischer Perspektive (167-339). Hier behandelt er – wie könnte es anders sein? – besonders ausführlich das 19. Jahrhundert. Von der Reformation über altprotestantisch-orthodoxe Missionsversuche und den klassischen Pietismus spannt Reifler den Bogen hin zu den wichtigsten deutschen Missionsgründungen des 19. Jahrhunderts, aber auch zu Frauen in der Mission und den großen internationalen, vorwiegend amerikanischen Gesellschaften. Über Warneck wird verhältnismäßig umfangreich berichtet (250-257), aber auch John R. Mott, Karl Hartenstein und Walter Freytag bleiben nicht unerwähnt. Skizzen zum ökumenischen und evangelikalen Missionsverständnis in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts sowie zur postmodernen Herausforderung runden den missionshistorischen Teil ab.

Am umfassendsten informiert der praktisch orientierte dritte Teil über die Mission „aus sozialwissenschaftlicher Perspektive“ (343-598). Die Missionsanthropologie führt in das weite Problemfeld „Mission und Kultur“ ein. Globalisierung, interkulturelle Kommunikation, Missionsstrategie sowie praktische Probleme der Mission (Mission und Geld; Wo es keinen Arzt gibt, Mitarbeiterbetreuung usw.) sind weitere Fragestellungen dieses Teils.

Im Epilog nimmt Reifler aktuelle Herausforderungen in den Blick: Missionsförderung, Demographie, die nichtchristlichen Weltreligionen, die Frage der Medizin und Fragestellungen verschiedener Länder und Kontinente. Alle Kapitel des Buchs werden durch didaktische Fragen und Hinweise auf weiterführende Literatur abgerundet.

Reiflers Handbuch der Missiologie ist ein evangelika-

les Handbuch, an dessen Seite in Deutschland kein vergleichbares Überblickswerk gestellt werden kann. Es sei hiermit nachdrücklich nicht nur zum einführenden Studium an deutschen theologischen Seminaren, sondern auch zur Übersetzung in weitere europäische Sprachen empfohlen.

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The World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910

Brian Stanley

Studies in the history of Christian missions; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009, xxii + 348pp., \$45.00, pb, ISBN 978-0-8028-6360-7

SUMMARY

The World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910 had a massive influence on subsequent thinking about mission, the contextualization of the gospel and Christianity's relationship to the religions of the world. The spirit of Christian cooperation at the Conference and its goal to evangelise the world also gave a major push to ecumenical ventures in the twentieth century. Upon its centenary, the University of Edinburgh's Brian Stanley has written its definitive history. He convincingly shows how the questions asked at the Conference and answers proposed there are still very much on the agenda of contemporary theological and missiological reflection. This work will be highly valued by scholars interested in missiology and the history of missions, modern church history, ecumenism and a Christian theology of the world religions.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Weltmissionskonferenz in Edinburgh im Jahr 1910 übte in der Folgezeit einen gewaltigen Einfluss auf die Auffassung von Mission, die Kontextualisierung des Evangeliums und auf die Beziehung des Christentums zu den anderen Weltreligionen aus. Der die Konferenz prägende Geist christlicher Zusammenarbeit und ihr Ziel, die Welt zu evangelisieren, verlieh auch den ökumenischen Bemühungen im 20. Jahrhundert einen bedeutenden Aufschwung. Zum hundertjährigen Jubiläum dieser Konferenz hat Brian Stanley (Universität von Edinburgh) deren offizielle Geschichte niedergeschrieben. Auf überzeugende Weise legt er dar, wie die Fragen, die bei jener Konferenz gestellt, und die Antworten, die damals vorgeschlagen wurden, immer noch sehr das gegenwärtige theologische und missionarische Denken prägen. Theologen, die an Missiologie und Missionsgeschichte sowie an moderner Kirchengeschichte, Ökumene und an einer christlichen Theologie der Weltreligionen interessiert sind, werden dieses Werk besonders schätzen.

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In the summer of 1910, some 1200 delegates from Protestant churches and missionary organisations around

the world gathered in Edinburgh to discuss the means and manner of the evangelisation of the non-Christian world. Participants at this World Missionary Conference (WMC) fervently believed that they were gathering at 'a kairós moment' (3) in history: the providentially-ordained confluence of the colonial map, the money and military muscle of Europe and America and evangelical enthusiasm could accomplish nothing less than the global expansion of the gospel in their generation. Hindsight provides a more sober perspective. Only four years later war ripped apart the international and ecumenical fraternity celebrated by the delegates; the bloody course of the twentieth century would bury the notion of a Christian Europe or Christendom that underlay their understanding of mission. Who could then have anticipated that Christianity would come to flourish not primarily in 'sophisticated' Asia but rather 'simple' Africa or that the gospel would be spread with 'signs and wonders' rather than in the 'good and proper order' of conventional Protestantism? Yet hindsight also makes clear that the participants were right to think that the WMC was of momentous importance, for it would profoundly shape mission and missiology, ecumenism and Christian attitudes to other religions in the twentieth century and beyond. Upon its centenary, Brian Stanley of the University of Edinburgh has written an account worthy of the great gathering. The breadth of its narrative, the depth of its historical research and the sharpness of its theological reflection make this book a definitive interpretation that will surely stimulate further historical and theological reflection upon its enduring and diverse significance.

Stanley locates the WMC at the terminus of a long century of extensive Protestant missions that had already inspired missionary councils as well as birthed the study of mission as a formal theological discipline. He then reconstructs the history of the Conference from its earliest planning stages, when the organising committee decided for an assembly that was more deliberately international and theologically diverse in scope and rigorously 'scientific' in its approach to mission than were the preceding missionary conferences, through its daily sessions in June 1910, as delegates met to pray, worship and above all discuss the detailed reports of eight commissions that had been prepared beforehand. These bulky commission reports were based on answers to questionnaires sent out to field missionaries. They addressed topics of practical concern to missionaries such as training and home support as well as the central missiological issues of ecumenical cooperation, the indigenisation of gospel and church and the relation of Christianity to other religions. Along the way, Stanley eavesdrops on organisers' meetings as they wrangled to secure ecumenical involvement, opens irritable letters shot across the Atlantic between sparring British and American planning committees, introduces the main personalities of the Conference, especially two future giants of twentieth-century ecumenism, John Mott and

J. H. Oldham, and carefully registers the assent and dissent voiced from the assembly floor in response to the commission hearings.

The WMC could not live up to its grand title. It was representative neither of the world's peoples nor the world's churches. The racial hierarchy held by almost everyone of that day excluded indigenous African voices from a supposedly global and ecumenical discussion of missions - Africa's peoples were too primitive, its churches too young. Except for nineteen Asians, the delegates in Edinburgh were males of European or American nationality, mostly of broadly evangelical conviction. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox communions would obviously not participate and it took no small effort to convince the Anglo-Catholic wing of the Church of England to attend. Indeed, the cost of broadening the Conference's ecclesiastical spectrum to include Anglo-Catholics was the further narrowing of the concept of mission, for they staunchly refused to countenance mission into Catholic or Orthodox countries. Stanley points out that we today find the WMC operating with a truncated concept of mission. Not only was 'Carrying the Gospel to all the World' (the title of Commission I) equated exclusively with evangelisation, the WMC presumed a world neatly sliced into either Christendom or Heathendom, with the former (Europe, America and the British Empire) not in need of mission because it already possessed the gospel.

Regarding two of the WMC's important legacies, ecumenism and the theology of world religions, Stanley brings new insights. Today the WMC is remembered above all as a milestone of modern ecumenism, with Mott and Oldham later in life drawing a straight line between Edinburgh and the formation of the World Council of Churches. However, Stanley reveals that the impulse it gave to the unity of churches was somewhat surprising, since the Anglo-Catholics agreed to participate only if questions of ecclesiology and doctrine were not raised.

The most theologically meaty chapter (8) in the book concerns the famous Commission IV report on Christianity and the world religions. Dissonance is detected within the report between the majority-held 'theology of fulfilment', which located Christianity at the crown of an evolutionary ladder of religions and saw mission as planting 'the cross on the pagoda' (246), and a few articulate voices who emphasised the uncomfortable fact of the gospel's discontinuity with other faiths. That such complex theological questions are hotly debated a century later suggests the continuing relevancy of the WMC and commends Stanley's work as both a lively portrait of the golden age of Protestant missions and a valuable resource for contemporary theological reflection on the nature of mission, the gospel and context, and the concept of a 'World Christianity'.

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