EVANGELICAL MISSIOLOGY IN WESTERN EUROPE - AN ANABAPTIST PERSPECTIVE

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On the Evangelical Movement in German Speaking Europe

Within the larger theme "Mission in Global and Anabaptist Perspective" this presentation focuses on Europe, more precisely – as the title indicates – on Western Europe. In fact, I narrow it down one step further to the topic: "Evangelical Theology of Mission in German Speaking Europe – An Anabaptist Perspective".

German Evangelicalism is a rather recent phenomenon. In its present shape it is a child of the great split of the 1960s between so called *ecumenicals* and *evangelicals*. This is a sad story. Both *evangelicals* as well *as ecumenicals* have lost a lot through this polarisation – a polarisation, which almost nowhere in the world is as strong and long lasting as it has been in Germany.

But there is another sad element to the story: Mennonites in German speaking Europe are strongly affected by this history. Those who where inspired by Pietism and Neo-Pietism in earlier centuries count themselves as part of the evangelical movement. These are mainly the Mennonite groups in South Germany and Switzerland, but also the Mennonite Brethren Churches and those of Russian background. Others, especially those in North Germany and also the Dutch Mennonites would rather hold to the ecumenical movement. The sad thing is that the *ecumenical-evangelical* controversy has been imported into the Mennonite community.

In my view, the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement has, grounded in its heritage, the potential of pointing a way beyond the polarisation, and maybe it has the task of building bridges between the two opposed movements. This is at least the way I have seen my contribution in recent years.

This is the perspective of this presentation. It is, in a certain way, an account of my personal pilgrimage with and sometimes between *evangelicals* and *ecumenicals*. First I will offer some general comments on the evangelical movement in German speaking Europe. Secondly, I will introduce three strands of dialogue I have been involved with in recent years. Third – the most extensive – section focuses on one particular topic which returns to the discussion table over and over again.

General Comments on the Evangelical Movement in German Speaking Europe

In German we use the term *evangelikal* to refer to what in English is called

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evangelical. But the word *evangelikal* is an ambiguous term.[1] First of all it is not a German word; it is just the Germanized form of the English *evangelical*. Originally the English word *evangelical* was simply the translation of the German *evangelisch* – for instance Karl Barth's *Einführung in die evangelische Theologie* is translated *Introduction to Evangelical Theology*.

The term *evangelical*, however, became the label for a specific stream within the larger Protestant movement. Carrying this specific meaning it was then introduced back into the German speaking context as *evangelikal*. This happened in the 1960s. By creating this new term German evangelicals achieved two things: (1) They gained identity through a term which is clearly distinguishable from the German *evangelisch* which comprised the entire Protestant movement. (2) Secondly, in a phase of crisis and weakness they strengthened their identity by linking with the international, especially the North American *evangelical* movement.

In Germany the evangelical movement has become a recognizable force with a quite clear identity. The movement understands itself as standing on the shoulders of early Pietism and the neo-pietistic movements of the 19th century. This means that it includes free churches, independent mission movements, many interdenominational Bible schools as well as the so called *Gemeinschaftbewegung* (Fellowship-Movement) within the Lutheran state churches. The largest and most important institutional umbrella of Evangelicals in Germany is the *Evangelical Alliance* (Evangelische Allianz!).[2] Under this umbrella many institutions and associations developed. In view of our topic I only mention *The Association of Evangelical Theologians*, *The Association of Evangelical Missions*, *The Association for an Evangelical Missiology* and the *Akademie für Weltmission* (Graduate School of World Mission) in Korntal/Stuttgart, which is the European campus of *Columbia International University*, South Carolina.

The term *evangelikal* is used by evangelicals in Germany without hesitation. It has become a clear identity term, indicating opposition to the so called liberal and ecumenical wing of the Protestant movement.

Not quite so in Switzerland. While there is a recognizable evangelical movement, also under the umbrella of the national *Evangelical Alliance*, the term *evangelikal* has never been liked. There may be many reasons for this. One is certainly that the opposition over against the more liberal and ecumenical wing of the Protestant movement never had the strong apologetic, even polemical tone as it used to have – and sometimes still has – in Germany. This led to the situation that evangelical institutions in Switzerland seldom use

[1] See more in Bernhard Ott, *Beyond Fragmentation. Integrating Mission and Theological Education*. Oxford: Regnum Books, 2001 (:27-34).

[2] Friedhelm Jung sees three mayor groups representing German evangelicalism, the Evangelical Alliance, the *Bekenntnisbewegung* within the Lutheran Church, and the Pentecostals (*Die deutsche evangelikale Bewegung – Grundlinien ihrer Geschichte und Theologie*. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1992).

the term *evangelikal* in their names. *The Association of Evangelical Missions* is not called *Arbeitsgemeinschaft evangelikaler Missionen*, but *Arbeitsgemeinschaft evangelischer Missionen*. *The Association of Evangelical Theologians* is not called *Arbeitsgemeinschaft evangelikaler Theologen*, but *Arbeitsgemeinschaft für biblisch erneuerte Theologie* (Association for a biblically renewed theology).

Another difference between German und Swiss evangelicalism is highlighted by the observation that the German *Association of Evangelical Missions* took as their theological foundation the *Frankfurt Declaration* in addition to the *Lausanne Covenant*, while the Swiss Association is based only on the *Lausanne Covenant*.

Dialogue with Ecumenicals and Evangelicals: A Personal Account

I am currently involved in three processes of dialogue. 1) One consists of a group of missiologists who advise the Association of Evanagelical Missions in Switzerland on theological issues, and who conduct an official dialogue between the ecumenical and evangelical missions in Switzerland. 2) The Association for an Evangelical Missiology (Arbeitsgemeinschaft für eine evangelikale Missiologie) invited me to speak at a conference in 2005 on the topic "German Evangelical Theology of Mission - Quo Vadis?"

I interpret this title as a sign of hope. For many years the course of German evangelical theology of mission was quite clearly defined by the *Frankfurt Declaration* and the impact of Peter Beyerhaus. The result was an apologetic, even polemic anti-ecumenical position. Even the *Lausanne Covenant* was criticised as being too open and too much a compromise with the ecumenical view of mission.

I have always questioned this one-sided conservative position of the German evangelical theology of mission. Most sharply and loudly I presented an evidence based critique in my doctoral dissertation.[3] At that time I was not quite sure whether certain evangelicals would excommunicate me from their institutions and associations!

The situation became critical when Klaus Schäfer of the *Evangelische Missionswerk Hamburg*, a Lutheran theologian representing the ecumenical missions, reviewed the published dissertation and wrote the following:[4]

> One is tempted to summarize with reference to a phrase from Martin Luther who in his time spoke of the 'Babylonian Captivity of the Church', and to see Ott's work calling into question the 'Babylonian Captivity of German Evangelical Missiology'. It is the captivity to an anti-ecumenical 'apocalyptic apologetic' and the narrow theology of Peter Beyerhaus and his pupils, it is the captivity in German Lutheranism which is not able to acknowledge a wholistic theology of the kingdom of God, it is the

[3] Bernhard Ott, *Beyond Fragmentation. Integrating Mission and Theological Education*. Oxford: Regnum Books, 2001.

[4] In *Tranformation19/2* (2002) (:144-149). A shorter German version is published in *Zeitschrift für Mission 29/1-2* (2003) (:126-127).

captivity in North American conservative evangelicalism and the captivity in dogmatism, institutionalized conservatism and biblical orthodoxy, and it is not least the captivity to a mindset that is dominated by a fear of change.

I was not excommunicated from evangelical circles. On the contrary: the *Association for an Evangelical Missiology* convened a consultation inviting Klaus Schäfer and me in order to dialogue on the different issues which have caused so much polarisation over the last 40 years. This was in October 2003. It was perhaps the first official consultation of *evangelical* and *ecumenical* missiologists in Germany since the split in the 1960s. This is a sign of hope.

When the *Association for an Evangelical Missology* today asks "Quo vadis?", it signals the search for new ways beyond the shadows of the *Frankfurt Declaration,* Peter Beyerhaus and George W. Peters.[5]

This search, however, is not supported by all Evangelicals. To take but one example: recently the German translation of G. W. Peters' *A Biblical Theology of Mission*, first published in 1977, was reprinted with an extensive introduction by Helmut Egelkraut, a leading Lutheran evangelical theologian and missiologist. Egelkraut warns the German evangelical mission movement by claiming that it is losing its clear Biblical foundation and that it is moving in the direction that the WCC did 40 years ago - accepting the socio-political agenda inspired by Liberation Theology.[6]

(3) Egelkraut's warning is directed towards a third stream of reflection and interaction among evangelicals in German speaking Europe. There is a still small, but growing group of mission practitioners who talk and reflect on *Christian community development*. Most of them are internationally involved in various types of missionary social work. They are aware of the international dialogue on topics such as *transformational development* and *integral mission*. However they also realize that in their home country Germany theologians and church leaders are highly sceptical regarding such concepts.

Today this group of holistic mission practitioners want to reflect theologically on what they are doing. They are eager to explore Biblical as well as theological foundations for an integral understanding of mission. Given the history and the position of German evangelical missiology, however, they do not get much help from their theologians at home.

In February 2005 I was invited to their annual conference on *Christian community development.* There were two questions they expected me to answer for them:
(1) Why have German evangelicals in the last forty years largely opposed integral mission,

[5] G. W. Peters was called 1978 to establish the *Akademie für Weltmission* (at that time *Freie Hochschule für Mission*). In his person, Russian Mennonite Brethren Pietism and North American conservative evangelicalism were united. He was warmly welcomed by German evangelicals, and he has shaped German evangelical theology of mission not least through his book *A Biblical Theology of Mission*, which was translated into German 1977.

[6] Helmut Egelkraut/George W. Peters, *Biblischer Auftrag – Missionarisches Handeln. Eine biblische Theologie der Mission*. Bad Liebenzell: VLM, 2005, 3rd, enlarged edition (:LXXV-LXIX).

and this despite the rich heritage of Christian social work in Pietism?
(2) What could be the elements of a solid Biblical foundation for holistic mission?

In the following third section of my paper I offer an abridged version of what I presented at that conference. For a North American Anabaptist-Mennonite audience this may be meaningful on two levels: tt is an account of how one particular Mennonite theologian in German-speaking Europe operates in dialogue with the German evangelical theology of mission. It may also provide some helpful insights to the very question: Why have German Evangelicals in the last forty years largely opposed integral mission and this despite the rich heritage of Christian social work in Pietism?

Historical Perspective: German Evangelicals and Holistic Mission

The key question to address here is: why have German Evangelicals over the past forty years largely opposed integral mission, and this despite the rich heritage of Christian social work in Pietism?

The outstanding contribution of the Pietist movement to Christian social work is unchallenged. Much has been written on the Pietist heritage of social work.[7] This is certainly not the place to go into the details. I will follow only one thread, the thread of an expert. Klaus Bockmühl in his booklet *Die Aktualität des Pietismus* (The Continued Relevance of Pietism) summarises the key features of the Pietist heritage. Besides other aspects he refers to "the educational contribution of Pietism" (*der pädagogische Beitrag des Pietismus*), "the task of social work" (*der diakonische Auftrag*) and "Pietism and social ethics" (*Der Pietismus und die Sozialethik*).[8] The way the three topics are distinguished is already significant. (1) At the centre is what in German is called *Diakonie*. *Diakonie* is the type of Christian social work which is defined as "ministry of love for those in need". It is the expected normal practical Christian life, the fruit of a living faith which does not remain invisible but finds its outward expression in deeds of compassion. With reference to Galatians 5:6, the phrase "faith, expressing itself through love" is frequently used.[9] This attitude led to the foundation of many social institutions, such as homes for poor, children and orphans, hospitals and homes for the elderly. *Diakonie* contains first of all deeds of mercy and compassion towards those in need, especially the victims of injustice and violence. It does not aim primarily at the transformation of a possibly unjust social or political system.

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[7] Cf. the standard historical work by Gerhard Uhlhorn, *Die christliche Liebestätigkeit*. Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1959 (reprint of the edition of 1895) (:653-760); see also Erich Beyreuther, *Geschichte der Diakonie und inneren Mission in der Neuzeit*. Berlin: Wichern-Verlag, 1962 (2nd ed.); Marc Edouard Kohler, *Kirche als Diakonie*. Zürich: TVZ, 1991 (:68-75); Reinhard Turre, *Diakonik: Grundlegung und Gestalt der Diakonie*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1991 (:19-28).

[8] Klaus Bockmühl, *Die Aktualität des Pietismus*. Giessen/Basel: Brunnen Verlag, 1985 (:35-37; 42-51).

[9] Cf. Martin Flaig, "'Glaube, der in der Liebe tätig ist' – Die diakonische Dimension des Pietismus als Herausforderung für die Gegenwart", in Hartmut Schmid (ed.), *Was will der Pietismus? Historische Beobachtungen und aktuelle Herausforderungen.* Wuppertal: Brockhaus Verlag, 2002 (:157-187).

(2) Secondly we turn to "the educational contribution" of Pietism. This refers to the foundation of schools by the early Pietists. Outstanding are the works of Comenius and Francke. The Neo-Pietist movement of the 19th century again was characterised by the foundation of schools and teachers' colleges. Here we observe a stronger emphasis on transformation. Hans-Günther Heimbrock argues that Pietist education was based on the belief that a human being is open for transformation into the image of God.[10] He shows also that early Pietist educators understood their work as being a work of salvation (*Rettung*), helping children to overcome a sinful life.[11] Finally, educational work would contribute to the "restoration of an entire Christian society".[12] This goes definitely beyond *Diakonie* in the sense I described earlier. We can say that the transformational dimension of Pietist social work is closely related to ministries of education.

(3) Finally Bockmühl speaks about "social ethics". Here he points to some very significant realities in connection with our topic. Bockmühl refers to John Stott who calls for a stronger Christian involvement in shaping society. Stott, in the words of Bockmühl, can support his call with a longstanding British evangelical tradition of Christian social ethics reaching back to Wilberforce and others. At this point Bockmühl makes the remarkable comment that the German evangelical tradition does not have such a heritage. This is due – says Bockmühl – to the Lutheran so called *Zwei-Reiche-Lehre* (Doctrine of the two Kingdoms). This has lead to an inherited scepticism over against all attempts to apply Christian principles (such as the Sermon on the Mount) to society at large. Here we have reached the very root of the opposition of German evangelicals towards those forces which under the label "integral mission" aim at the christianisation of society.

This last element provides an initial clue for the answer of the question: "Why have German Evangelicals in the last forty years opposed integral mission". However there are other aspects which need to be taken into account. I will review four forces which have shaped the critical stance of German evangelicals towards holistic mission:

(1) The differences between Lutheranism and Calvinism;
(2) The differences between post-millennialism and pre-millennialism;
(3) The influence of American Dispensationalism;
(4) The anti-ecumenical reflex of the 1960s and 1970s.

(1) The difference between John Stott and Klaus Bockmühl I mentioned earlier has its roots in different emphases in Calvinism and Lutheranism in their view of society. Jürgen Moltmann, referring to the Reformed and the Lutheran position claims: "The very strong differences in post-war Germany – to this day – over questions of politics and social ethics

[10] Cf. Hans-Günther Heimbrock, *Nicht unser Wollen oder Laufen. Diakonisches Lernen in Schule und Gemeinde*. Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990 (:12).
[11] Heimbrock (:14).
[12] Heimbrock (:15).

find their basis in the difference between these two conceptions."[13]

What is the basic difference? Luther[14] held a rather pessimistic view regarding the transformability of society. His strong emphasis on the sinfulness of human beings and his apocalyptic worldview led him to this conviction. Behind this is the understanding that history is the battlefield between the "Kingdom of evil" (*regnum diaboli*) and the "Kingdom of God" (*regnum Dei*). God fights the kingdom of evil with a double strategy: (a) On the one hand he opposes evil and preserves creation and society through the powers of states, governments and laws (the worldly rule, the kingdom to the left). (b) On the other hand he proclaims the word of the gospel which leads to the salvation of individuals by grace through faith (the spiritual rule; the kingdom to the right).

These two strategies should never be confused. Rulers, states and governments should never intervene in the affairs of the proclamation of the gospel. And the church should never attempt to rule society with the tools of the gospel (e.g. the Sermon on the Mount).

Based on this distinction Lutheran missiologists have always tended to restrict the term "mission" to the spiritual kingdom, the proclamation of the gospel. In turn they normally oppose a definition of mission which includes tasks of the worldly kingdom, such as the rule and the preservation of society.

Finally, based on the understanding that society is not transformable towards the kingdom of God, the emphasis of Lutheranism is on order and preservation, not on transformation.

In contrast, the Calvinist view has the notion of transformation at its very heart.[15] Based on the doctrine of the sovereignty of God Calvinism has a much more optimistic view of progress in society and history. Starting with the individual Christian through the Christian church and into all spheres of society and culture, God intends to transform fallen realities toward his kingdom.[16]

The tension between these two theories can be observed across all the debates on mission in the 20th century.[17] This is true for the evangelical-ecumenical debate and also for the inner-evangelical controversies. If we read through the documents of the many evangelical consultations on evangelism and social responsibility which have taken place

[13] Jürgen Moltmann, *Following Jesus Christ in the World Today. Occasional Papers No. 4*. Elkhart: Institute for Mennonite Studies, 1983 (:19), cf. in German Jürgen Moltmann, *Politische Theologie – Politische Ethik*. München: Kaiser (123).

[14] On the Lutheran view see Moltmann, *Following Jesus* (:19-39); Moltmann, *Politische Ethik* (:123-136); Gerd Flügel, *Politisch Christ sein.* Neukirchen-Vluyn: Aussaat Verlag, 1990 (:23-26); Robert E. Webber, *The Secular Saint. The Role of the Christian in the Secular World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981 (:113-127); Kurt-Dietrich Schmidt, *Kichengeschichte*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1979 (7th ed.) (:321-327).

[15] Webber (:144-153).

[16] Flügel (:26-29); Moltmann (:41-60).

[17] The ongoing tension between the Anglo-Saxon and the Continental-European position in the ecumenical debate is documented by Gerhard Sautter, *Heilgeschichte und Mission. Zum Verständnis der Heilsgeschichte in der Missionstheologie*. Giessen/Basel: Brunnen Verlag, 1985 (:80-166).

after Lausanne 1974, we encounter the tension on almost every page. In general: Calvinists have promoted a transformational understanding of mission including social and socio-political dimensions.[18] Lutherans have resisted such tendencies and have warned of developments toward a "social gospel" which would confuse the two realms of God's reign. Mission theologians of Calvinist orientation have criticised the Lutheran emphasis on order and preservation.[19] In turn German evangelical Lutherans have attacked the transformational emphasis of many evangelical Anglo-Saxon Protestant mission theologians.[20]

(2) Following from this first observation we can naturally move to diverging eschatological conceptions.[21] It comes as no surprise that the post-millennialism of the 19th century emerged and prospered on Calvinist soil.[22] It is the optimistic outlook of the transformational worldview which gave birth to an eschatological conception which envisioned a continuing development of God's kingdom to its world-wide culmination *before* the return of Christ. On the other hand it is only logical that a more pessimistic, apocalyptic worldview would hold to a pre-millennial eschatology. As we all know, post-millennialism more or less collapsed with World War I – and definitely with World War II. However a more optimistic outlook still characterises Calvinistic influenced theology of mission. Here again we have a pattern of struggle between Anglo-Saxon and German evangelical theologies of mission.[23]

(3) The rise of dispensationalism added another dimension to the controversy between a more optimistic, transformational Calvinist and a more pessimistic, preservational Lutheran world view. Despite the fact that dispensationalism emerged within a Calvinist context, it developed a much more pessimistic and apocalyptic view of history. Especially the doctrine of the spiritual, moral and cultural decline of every dispensation lead to the conclusion that a transformation toward a better society is not God's intention.[24] The missiological implications are obvious: Not the transformation of society has priority but the salvation of individuals out of a society destined for damnation.

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[18] This can easily be seen in the documents of the Grand Rapids "Consultation on Evangelism and Social Responsibility" of 1982. German in Klaus Bockmühl, *Verkündigung und soziale Verantwortung*. Giessen/Basel: Brunnen, 1983.

[19] Cf. Vinay Samuel, one of the key promoters of a holistic understanding of mission, reviewed in Christopher Sugden, *The Asian Faith of Jesus*. Oxford: Regnum, 1997 (:212-215).

[20] The most thorough critique of Viney Samuel, Chris Sugden, Ronald Sider and others comes from Eberhard Berneburg, *Das Verhältnis von Verkündigung und sozialer Aktion in der evangelikalen Missionstheorie*. Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1997.

[21] Cf. Hans Schwarz, *Jenseits von Utopie und Resignation. Einführung in die christliche Eschatologie.* Wuppertal: Brockhaus Verlag, 1990 (:205-209).

[22] The post-millennial view is presented by Loraine Boettner, "Postmillenialism", in Robert G. Clouse (Ed.), *The Meaning of the Millennium. Four Views.* Downers Grove: InterVarity Press, 1977 (:117-141).

[23] The influence of Anglo-Saxon eschatological theories on German churches, in the case of Methodism, is helpfully presented by Christoph Raedel, "'Die Zeichen der Zeit erkennen' – Spekulative Eschatologie im deutschsprachigen Methodismus 1983-1914", in *Jahrbuch für Evangelikale Theologie 2004* (:145-171).

[24] Cf. C. I. Scofield, *Legen wir die Bibel richtig aus?* Wetzlar: Herman Schulte Verlag, 1974 (:21) [= translation of *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*]; also Raedel (:152-153).

Through many North American missions and through the Bible School movement, dispensationalism had a tremendous influence on some sectors of German evangelicalism in the post-war period.[25] It is not insignificant to notice that George W. Peters, an American dispensationalist from Dallas Theological Seminary, was the first director of the Graduate School for Mission in Korntal. Peters, however, was not only a North American Dispensationalist, he was also a Mennonite of Russian-German background influenced by German Neo-Pietism. This combination made him extremely fitting for his task at Korntal.

Peters' *Theology of Mission* was translated in 1977 and became a major textbook in many German evangelical Bible Schools. His position leaves no doubts: there are two mandates. One is the cultural mandate which is given to humanity, the other is the mission-mandate which is given to Christians. These two should not be confused.[26] To do social and cultural work is a good thing and Christians should certainly participate in the shaping of society and culture. However this falls under the categories of "philanthropical and human service" – and this is not "mission" in a Biblical sense. Mission is exclusively evangelism.[27]

(4) Finally German evangelical theology of mission is shaped by an outspoken strong opposition to the World Council of Churches' understanding of mission. The work of Peter Beyerhaus and the *Frankfurt Declaration* – still the foundational confession of the AEM – are at the heart of this struggle.

We must see this opposition in historical perspective. As I said earlier, the optimistic world view of Post-Millennialism died among evangelicals with World War I. However the notion of establishing the kingdom of God on earth survived – not least in the so called "social gospel" movement. Walter Rauschenbusch, a key figure of the movement, put it as follows. "The 'essential' purpose of Christianity' is 'to transform human society into the kingdom of God by regenerating all human relationships."[28] While the idea of an evolution toward the kingdom of God in this world found its continuation in this social gospel movement and later in the ecumenical movement, many North American evangelicals turned from post-millennialism to pre-millennialism and dispensationalism. With this they lost the engagement for social responsibility and they started to oppose strongly the social gospel movement and then also the ecumenical movement.[29]

Withn the ecumenical movement further steps toward an immanent understanding of God's kingdom were taken.[30] In 1950 Johannes Christiaan Hoeckendijk published his

[25] For a summary and additional sources see Ott, *Fragmentation* (:31-34); also Bernhard Ott, "Missionstheologie in evangelikaler theologischer Ausbildung", in Heinrich Löwen/Hans Kasdorf (eds.), *Gemeinsam im Auftrag des Herrn (Festschrift für John N. Klassen)*. Bornheim/Bonn: Puls Verlag, 1999 (:123-139).

[26] At this point Peters sounds very Lutheran.

[27] George W. Peters, *Missionarisches Handeln und biblischer Auftrag*. Bad Liebenzell: Verlag der Liebenzeller Mission, 1977 (:181-187) [= translation of *A Biblical Theology of Mission*].

[28] Quoted in Berneburg (:40).

[29] Cf. Berneburg (:35).

[30] Cf. Sautter.

article "The Call to Evangelism"[31] in which he developed an integral understanding of evangelism based on the Biblical concept of *shalom*. He proposed that the goal of evangelism is *shalom*. This includes much more than individual salvation; it is peace, integrity, fellowship, harmony and justice.[32] This goal will be reached through integral mission incorporating the proclamation of *shalom* (*kerygma*), the living of *shalom* in community (*koinonia*) and the demonstration of *shalom* (*diakonia*).[33] Referring to the Apostles' Creed he suggested that we add: "I believe in the Church as a means in the hands of God to establish *shalom* in this world".[34]

Dietrich Bonhoeffer's statement, "The church is only the church if it is the church for others", Johannes Hoeckendijk's concept of *shalom*, and Walter Hollenweger's statement, "The world sets the agenda", have each influenced the developments of the ecumenical theology of mission of the 1960s and 1970s. Mission became a programme for the humanisation of this world, a struggle for peace and justice.[35]

It is against this theology of mission in WCC circles that the *Frankfurt Declaration* took position. The strong words of denunciation may have had their place in a given situation. Klaus Bockmühl commented later that these polemical anti-ecumenical statements had a function similar to an "emergency brake". However – says Bockmühl – they are too one-sided to serve as foundational texts for an evangelical theology of mission. Bockmühl called for basic theological work that goes beyond an antithesis to the WCC's theology of mission. He sees in the Lausanne Covenant the first text providing a more balanced and integrative understanding of mission.[36] With this Bockmühl refers mainly to issues relating to the social dimension of the gospel and of mission.

On the other side, Peter Beyerhaus has always criticised Lausanne exactly for its openness toward the integration of the social and political dimensions into the theology of the kingdom of God and into an evangelical understanding of mission.[37]

We can therefore say that the very strong anti-ecumenical pronouncements of Beyerhaus and the *Frankfurt Declaration* had their price: The social dimension of mission got lost. German evangelical theology of mission became suspicious of terms like kingdom

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[31] In *International Review of Missions 39, 1950* (:162-175); German: "Der Aufruf zur Evangelisation", in Johannes C. Hoekendijk, *Die Zukunft der Kirche und die Kirche der Zukunft.* Stuttgart: Kreuz Verlag, 1964 (:85-108).

[32] Hoekendijk, "Der Aufruf zur Evangelisation" (:96).

[33] Hoekendijk, "Der Aufruf zur Evangelisation" (:100-101).

[34] Hoekendijk, "Der Aufruf zur Evangelisation" (:100).

[35] A foundational analysis of these developments from an ecumenical perspective in Dietrich Werner, *Mission für das Leben – Mission im Kontext. Ökumenische Perspektiven missionarischer Präsenz in der Diskussion des ÖRK 1961-1991*. Rothenburg: Ernst Lange Institut für Ökumenische Studien, 1993. From an evangelical perspective, cf. Klaus Bockmühl, *Was heisst heute Mission? Entscheidungsfragen der neueren Missionstheologie*. Giessen/Basel: Brunnen Verlag, 1974 (:63-152).

[36] Bockmühl, *Was heisst heute Mission* (:162-179).

[37] Cf. Peter Beyerhaus, "Lausanne zwischen Berlin und Genf", in Walter Künneth/Peter Beyerhaus (eds.), *Reich Gottes oder Weltgemeinschaft?* Bad Liebenzell: Verlag der Liebenzeller Mission, 1975 (:294-313). See my interpretation of this fact in Ott, *Fragamentation* (:81-83).

of God, *shalom*, social responsibility, contextualisation, or holistic mission. All these terms belong to the vocabulary of ecumenical mission theology – and therefore can no longer be used by evangelical without being affected by the ecumenical disease. It is a pity that significant and integral aspects of the gospel were marginalised and even excluded in this manner.

With this we have established an understanding of some reasons for the general reluctance of German evangelicals toward a theology of holistic mission: (1) the Lutheran pessimistic and apocalyptic worldview; (2) a pre-millennial eschatology; (3) the influence of dispensationalism, and (4) a strong anti-ecumenical polemic.

But, this lack of a theology of integral mission does not mean that German evangelicals have not been involved in social ministries. On the contrary, they are heavily engaged in projects with social dimensions. However, it is my observation that they often do it with some degree of guilt because they know deeply that 'real' mission would be evangelism, church planting and theological teaching. Time and again I observe this troubled conscience as I listen to missionaries presenting their work in churches at home.

A second observation is that there is a lack of integrative thinking. The result is that evangelism and social work often stand side by side as two more or less unrelated activities. Where integration occurs, it is more likely due to circumstances or the personality of the missionary, than to a reflected conviction of holistic mission. But there is a great difference between the mere addition of evangelism and social work and what we call integral or holistic ministry.

My concern is not that German evangelical missionaries should do more social work. My conviction is that their evangelistic work and their social work would be much more integrated if they would reflect on their theological heritage and discover a more integrative theology of mission.

Elements of a Sound Biblical Foundation for Holistic Mission

Many Biblical terms, concepts and motives have been suggested for a foundation for holistic mission. The most prominent are

(1) the universal lordship or sovereignty of Christ,

(2) the kingdom of God,

(3) the fullness of God's salvation,

(4) the model of Jesus' life and ministry,

(5) the dignity of human beings, and

(6) the understanding of persons in community.[38]

Most arguments are well known and I do not want to repeat them here. I would

[38] Cf. Vinay Samuel in Sugden, *Asian Face*; Samuel/Sugden, *Transformation*; Ronald J. Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, 2nd ed. Downers Grove: Inter-Varity Press, 1984; Ronald J. Sider, *One-Sided Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993.

rather expand on a concept which – to my knowledge – has not received much attention but has the potential of being a very strong and sound foundation for holistic mission. It is the Biblical term *shalom*. I mentioned earlier that Johannes Hoeckendijk used the term when he introduced the concept of integral evangelism in the 1950s. Maybe evangelicals have been reluctant to use this term because of its ecumenical connotations. I suggest that we leave such feelings behind us and concentrate on the rich potential of this Biblical concept.

On Christmas Eve the angels introduced the birth of Jesus the saviour with the words: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those whom he favours" (Luke 2:14). This is the shortest formula of holistic mission I know. And it is not just a marginal text of the Bible; it is the programmatic announcement of Jesus the Messiah. There are two inseparable components: the glorification of God and peace on earth. But what does peace mean exactly?

Behind the Greek *eirene* stands the Hebrew *shalom*. The German Old Testament scholar Otto Betz suggests that the Hebrew noun *shalom* is derived from the verb *shillem* which means "to pay".[39] The status of *shalom* is reached when all debts are paid. *Shalom* is a social term. It describes relationships. In the Old Testament community it first of all qualifies human relationships. *Shalom* defines relationships in the context of material wealth, of land, of justice and of power.

Betz points out that the Hebrew greeting "*sha'al shalom*" is not merely a wish for peace; it is actually a question: "Is there *shalom*, or are there still debts to be paid?" Or paraphrased: "Are you happy to see me, or do I still owe you something?" If there is still a debt to be paid, there is not yet *shalom*. But debts can be paid, and *shalom* can return again.

But what if a debt is so great that it can never be paid? The only two solutions then, according to ancient Hebrew culture, are for someone to intervene and pay the "*shalom*-price" in place of the debtor, or else for the debt to be forgiven. In the Old Testament God's people knew various institutions designed to restore *shalom* by means of "*shalom*-price."[40]

Shalom encompasses all dimensions of life. Our relationship with God is part of the picture as well as social realities and even our relation to God's creation.

Applying Betz's statement we can say: *Shalom* is established, when I can look in God's eyes, asking: "Are you happy to see me, or do I still owe you something?" And when I can look in my neighbour's eyes asking the same question: "Are you happy to see me, or is there still a dept to be paid?" We may even apply it to creation, looking at the fields and the birds, the oceans and the mountains, asking: "Are you happy to see us, or do we still owe

[39] Otto Betz, "Der Friede Gottes in einer friedlosen Welt", in *Theologische Auseinandersetzung mit dem Denken unserer Zeit. Band 2*. Neuhausen-Stuttgart: Hänssler Verlag, 1984 (:57).

[40] For example, there was the liberation of slaves and the remission of debts in the Jubilee Year (Lev. 25). Cf. also the parable of the unforgiving slave in Matt. 18:23-35. For additional insight into the meaning of the Jubilee as a "*Shalom*-order", see John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972 (:64-77) [= *Die Politik Jesu – der Weg des Kreuzes*. Maxdorf: Agape Verlag, 1981 (:60-75)]; and Sider, *Rich Christians* (:79-99).

you something?"

This is not the place to look at the many Biblical texts which demonstrate the centrality and the comprehensiveness of the *Shalom*-concept. I only list some of the most significant passages:

- The re-established shalom in the Ruth-narrative.
- In the same way the Gospel-story about Zacchaeus.
- The Parable of the unmerciful servant in Matthew 18:21-35.
- The work of the servant of Lord in Isaiah 53.
- The "gospel of peace" of Ephesians 6:15, developed throughout Ephesians – especially in chapter 2.[41]
- Finally realization of *shalom* beyond the community of God's people in Jeremiah 29:7.

The Biblical concept of *shalom* provides the most powerful foundation for holistic mission. The spiritual and the material, the individual and the social dimensions are always inseparably tied together. The concept is Christologically anchored. At its heart stands the One who has paid the *shalom*-price in order to reconcile humanity with God and with one another. This reconciling work of Christ has a universal scope, yet it always has a personal and individual dimension. Persons like Ruth and Zacchaeus follow individually the invitation of God – but this never becomes individualistic. They live in community and God's *shalom* is experienced and lived in community. The Biblical *shalom* concept gives the church as new humanity – as *shalom* community – priority. But God's *shalom* intention goes beyond the church. Zacchaeus' *shalom*-behaviour transforms his town far beyond the his personal life and his family. The larger society participates in the blessings of God's *shalom*. Finally it is the church as new and reconciled humanity which is the most powerful demonstration over against the principalities and powers.

In this broad and integrative way we can conclude by saying: God's project is definitely peace on earth – to the glory of God in the highest.[42]

Conclusion

The title of this presentation is "Evangelical Missiology in Western Europe - an Anabaptist Perspective". I have presented to you a perspective based on my experience and my reflections in the context of German evangelicalism. Other German Anabaptist-Mennonite theologians would certainly contribute to the larger picture from different angles. Let us only think of Fernando Ens on one side and Johannes Reimer on the other side of the spectrum.

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[41] For the following I draw on Marlin E. Miller, "The Gospel of Peace", in Robert L. Ramseyer (ed.), *Mission and the Peace Witness*. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1979 (:9-23); as well as Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld, *Ephesians (Believers Church Bible Commentary)*. Scottdale: Herald Press, 2002.

[42] On the *Shalom*-theme see also my book *God's Shalom-Project.* Intercourse: Good Books, 2005.

Experience, research and reflection have led me to the following perception of the situation: German evangelical theology of mission has for too long lived in the shadow of an anti-ecumenical position as it is pronounced in the *Frankfurt Declaration*. Thereby German evangelical theology of mission has maneuvered itself into a situation of isolation. Themes which are central to a comprehensive Biblical understanding of mission, such as *Missio Dei*, kingdom of God, contextualisation, *shalom*, and integrative ministry are excluded from the picture because they carry *ecumenical* connotations.

A post-Beyerhaus generation of mission theologians is becoming aware of the deficiencies of such a position and is searching for new ways into the future. The expression "Quo vadis", recently used in this connection is an appropriate indicator of the current situation. I read it as a positive sign – a sign of transformation.

In this process my Anabaptist-Mennonite contribution is welcomed. This encourages me to engage in the dialogue with evangelicals as well as with ecumenicals.

Finally, beyond all boundaries we are confronted with the same overwhelming challenge in Europe. The burning question ultimately is: What is the future of the church in a post-Christian context? No one has an easy answer to this question. But we cannot afford simply sticking with the old agenda of the late 20th century while we are facing such tremendous challenges at the beginning of the 21st century. There is one issue which must be on the agenda and has not yet reached the German speaking world: What is the shape of the church in a post-Constantine, post-Christendom age? Here again, an Anabaptist contribution may be significant.