

# *Evangelicalism without Hyphens: Max Warren, the Tradition and Theology of Mission*

TIM YATES

Max Warren has been well covered in recent writing. As well as his autobiography and biography, he had become the object of researchers before his death.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the bibliography at CMS shows him to have written thirty books and many articles. What follows has been prompted by an invitation to lecture on Max's influence on British missiology and focuses on three areas: first, the special place in the Anglican Evangelical tradition which Max occupied, a subject of importance in current debates and of special interest to the readership of *Anvil*; secondly, an analysis of Max's understanding of history and its importance for contemporary Christian thought and life, where a synthesis of his widely scattered insights may be of value; thirdly, the problem which exercised him for the closing period of his life, how to express the distinctiveness or uniqueness of Christ in relation to modern religious pluralism.

## **Placing the Tradition**

Space does not permit justification for all the historical generalizations which follow, although I have tried to provide at least some substantiation in my history of St. John's College, Durham.<sup>2</sup> Anglican Evangelicalism had faced a critical period in the early 1920's. At the time of the CMS-BCMS divide in 1922 Max (b. 1904) was eighteen, Stephen Neill (b. 1900) twenty-two. Max's father had died in 1920 while in the employ of the CMS and Max was only dimly aware of the ructions. In Max's Cambridge of 1923-26, it was still possible to be a fully committed member of the CICCUC/IVF (Max was a college representative) and a member of the missionary branch of the SCM, the SVMU,<sup>3</sup> without great conflict of loyalties. Max and Stephen Neill each held office in both organizations, as Oliver Barclay records.<sup>4</sup> Max himself wrote: 'in matters Christian it was the last (generation) in which it was possible to be at one and the same time college representative of the CICCUC, as I was, and also secretary of the SVMU and also on the SCM Executive at the headquarters in London. A greater rigidity on the part of the CICCUC set in which was to make such a combination in future impossible'.<sup>5</sup>

The decades of the 1920s and 1930s, were the time of a burgeoning liberal evangelicalism. A book of that title appeared in 1923 with contributors such as H. A. Wilson, E. A. Burroughs, V. F. Storr and E. W. Barnes, later Bishop of Birmingham. The Anglican Evangelical Group Movement grew in numbers and influence. There were large gatherings for Liberal Evangelical platforms, for example, at Cromer, where in 1928 there was an attendance of a thousand. Nevertheless, for one informed observer, at least, Anglican Evangelicalism presented a melancholy spectacle in that year. Christopher Chavasse, later Bishop of Rochester, wrote the introduction to one of Max's early writings *What is an Evangelical?* In it he recalled his own father's appeal (F. J. Chavasse) to evangelicals at the Islington Conference of 1927, to avoid an 'excessive individualism leading to disintegration' and instead to 'entreat the Spirit of God to grant us the humility which hesitates to believe that, at all times and in all things, our own opinion must be right . . . we must crush under foot the temptation to imagine that if our fellow-Evangelicals do not hold exactly what we hold, or express themselves exactly as we do, it is our duty to decline to work with them, because they are not sound'. Christopher Chavasse, on whom the mantle of leadership had fallen after 1931, as chairman of the Oxford Evangelical Conference when Master of St. Peter's Hall, reminded the evangelicals of the 1940s of the difference between 1918 and 1928: 'bishop after bishop' had told W. E. S. Holland in 1918 that the 'future of the Church lay with the Evangelical School of Thought' but ten years later when Holland returned from India on furlough it was 'to find Evangelicals weak and discredited. They had split over the Bible and the Prayer Book'.<sup>6</sup>

Whatever the true position may have been, the Anglican Evangelicals who came to the fore in the late 1940s and early 1950s were a particular and important group. On the one hand, they were very aware of the dangers of liberalism. In one of his earliest books Max wrote in 1936 of the 'sapping paralysis of more than a century of undigested liberal philosophy' which had left the church 'without any very clear certainty as to the content of her message'. He quoted G. K. Chesterton on the church of antiquity: 'who does not realise that the whole world once very nearly died of broadmindedness and the brotherhood of all religions?'. Max added: 'once the Cross is made of none effect . . . then there ceases to be any place for a Gospel'.<sup>7</sup> This group was determined to reassert the virtues of a theology based firmly on the Bible as authoritative. J. R. S. Taylor, then Bishop of Sodor and Man, wrote in his introduction to Max's volume in a series of works by this group, called the St. Paul's Library series: 'there is a distinctively Anglican interpretation of Evangelical theology' which the Church needed. The contributors, he wrote, 'while valuing the freedom of thought and discussion which Liberal Protestantism has encouraged have yet deplored its vague humanitarianism as a barren substitute for the full Christian gospel'.<sup>8</sup>

Max in this volume drew largely on the writings of the evangelical fathers such as Simeon, Basil Woodd, Daniel Wilson and Edward Bickersteth on the subject of the Holy Communion; F. D. Coggan provided a volume on preaching.<sup>9</sup> In preparation for the Lambeth Conference of 1948, a book of papers was produced, under the chairmanship of K. G. (later Sir Kenneth) Grubb, with contributions from F. D. Coggan, Max, H. Earnshaw Smith, A. M. Stibbs, Bryan Green and others. Once again, there was an attempt to distance their theology from liberal protestantism: 'most of us would make the choice (of interpretation) differently from these liberal protestants' wrote one contributor.<sup>10</sup>

The fullest theological statement to come from this group was *The Fulness of Christ*<sup>11</sup> Stephen Neill and Max Warren were among the authors who were responding to Archbishop Fisher's invitation to present an Anglican Evangelical viewpoint alongside the Anglo-Catholic report *Catholicity* (1947) and the Free Church *The Catholicity of Protestantism* (1950). Alan Richardson, in a review exactly hit off the importance of the group who produced it: 'the leaders of the Anglican Evangelicals are not content to hand over the Catholic heritage of the Church of England to any mere section within it': the piece 'bears promise of the revival of interest in the theological matters within evangelical quarters . . . interest . . . so sadly lacking during recent years'. This, he wrote, was not an evangelicalism of a Handley Moule or a Griffith Thomas nor of a Vernon Storr of the liberal evangelicalism of the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement. The writers were 'in no sense near fundamentalist, like the older evangelical leaders. Nor . . . mildly and inoffensively "liberal protestant" like the "liberal evangelicals" of recent times.'<sup>12</sup> This expressed well the balance which the group maintained. They were unmistakably evangelical in theology with, in Max's case, the stress on an objective atonement, the authority of God's Word, conversion, the doctrine of assurance, which Max held particularly dear,<sup>13</sup> with their roots in the theology of the Reformation and the Pauline doctrine of justification by grace through faith. As Richardson wrote, they were biblical but not fundamentalist, conservative in doctrine but prepared for radical suggestions from that basis, for example towards a Church of England very hesitant, ecclesologically, to accept the Church of South India.

Max had inherited a tradition of inclusive evangelicalism. In his first address to the General Committee of the CMS in 1942, as newly appointed General Secretary, he said: 'I stand before you unashamedly proud of the word "evangelical", a word all too frequently qualified by adjectives which seem to detract from its pristine beauty and strength'.<sup>14</sup> This dislike of qualifying adjectives remained with him. The title of this article comes from a letter he wrote to A. C. Zabriskie, Dean of Virginia Theological Seminary in the United States, as he reflected on the foundation of the Evangelical Fellowship of Theological Literature

(EFTL). 'We determined to resist any temptation to hyphenate the word "evangelical". We believe that word can stand on its own merits as enshrining a great tradition within Anglicanism and wide enough to embrace theologically conservative and liberal elements'.<sup>15</sup> Towards the end of his time at CMS he returned to this theme: 'I am an Evangelical. I have never felt under any constraint to apologise for that designation, one of great and lofty lineage, not least within our own Anglican Communion. I like the word in its simple form, unhyphenated with others, whose usual association, in Britain at any rate, is with the platforms of political parties.'<sup>16</sup> Theologically, Max understood himself to be a 'biblical theologian.' 'The Bible is the place where I find God speaking to me . . . in so far as I possess any theological qualifications I would define myself as a *Biblical theologian*' (italics in original) but, he added, 'I would want to have an openminded attitude towards the discovery of Truth', and this included such truth as came from the biblical critics, many of whose ideas, however, soon dated in his experience.<sup>17</sup> This strongly biblical emphasis reflected the intention of this group to distance themselves from much liberal protestant theology, Continental and British; but with this went the emphasis on openness to truth, and an equal distancing from any approach to the Bible which precluded certain questionings on dogmatic grounds.<sup>18</sup> Max was, in Richardson's terms, neither fundamentalist nor 'mildly and inoffensively liberal protestant'. For Max this position was best summed up in the single word, 'evangelical'.

## History

Max was a historian by background and predilection. He had won a history scholarship to Jesus College, Cambridge in 1922 and became Lightfoot Ecclesiastical History Scholar in 1926. The bent of his mind was strongly historical. Although at home with the abstract ideas of the theologian, and well able to deploy them with effect, he had a mind for detail and for the concrete and he read very widely in historical studies. This was particularly the case in works about the British Empire and its development, which bore so closely on his own work at CMS. Some of this reading can be discerned in his two sets of lectures to the Cambridge faculty of divinity.<sup>19</sup> His access to the archives of CMS and his knowledge of the great nineteenth century missionary leader, Henry Venn, and his papers, gave added depth to this special interest.

Certain leading ideas on history, a subject which becomes more and more clearly of crucial importance to modern theology, can be set out here in a synthesis as governing Max's approach. Because he came to history from the standpoint of a biblical interpreter of it, these were biblical in basis. Max was not unaware, with many moderns, of the special position of the interpreter. He wrote: 'the interpretation of events is as much an event of history as the events themselves . . . ideas, as

surely as economic needs, make history. The economic interpretation of history fails to establish itself just because it fails to allow for this truth.<sup>20</sup> In this sense, Max was technically an idealist as an interpreter of history. He saw that 'ideas are aggressive and they seek dominion.'<sup>21</sup> But his own distinctive ideas were drawn from the Bible and this meant that he saw God in control of all history. Any division of sacred from secular, or of church history from political history, he deplored. God was in the whole. Max was at one with Alan Richardson's deep suspicion of the retreat from history by continental theologians, a retreat into 'sacred history' or 'saving history' (*Heilsgeschichte*), if that meant abstracting the history of the people of God from the general historical continuum. Max conceded what John Baillie called 'directional events' in the biblical story, but only provided that there was 'no divorce . . . between these events and the rest of history . . . in a strictly limited sense these events can be held to constitute "sacred history".'<sup>22</sup> Father Furey has discerned this aspect of Max's approach to history, which 'demonstrates that Christianity is never to be regarded as a religious activity divorced from life'. Max held that the Old Testament prophets had carried the 'continuing burden (of) . . . a tragic divorce between sacred and secular.'<sup>23</sup> He himself set out to find God's hand in all historical developments, not simply religious ones.

Early in his series of *CMS Newsletters* he noted the 'vacuum' in the soul of China. After the Communist take-over of 1948 he asked again and again whether the Communist regime was to be seen as a Cyrus or as Assyria, 'the rod of my anger'.<sup>24</sup> He returned frequently to certain key Old Testament passages (Isa. 10:5; 45:1-8; Jer. 25:9; Hab. 1:6). As vicar of Holy Trinity, Cambridge in the war years he had been deeply impressed by the message of the prophets, notably Habakkuk, and its relevance to the times in which he lived and preached: 'Munich drove me back to the great prophets of the Old Testament,'<sup>25</sup> he wrote. 'A brutal and utterly callous imperial power was threatening . . . his (Habakkuk's) own nation's survival . . . he expostulates with God . . . And God then leads him out into a new understanding of history.'<sup>26</sup> This was that the Chaldeans were being roused by the Lord in judgement. Was this, Max asked after 1948, the way to understand the Chinese revolution, Mao or even Stalin? 'If the Christian is to be consistent and have a Biblical faith he will see Communism no less as one of such instruments and Stalin and Mao Tse-Tung as two of God's many "servants". But that recognition will not minimise the awareness . . . that these men, like all God's servants, stand under the judgement of God.'<sup>27</sup> He quoted D. T. Niles with approval: 'Why cannot we see the power of God manipulating the events of the world even as the Old Testament historians discerned it? If God used Constantine that is no justification of Constantine . . . if God used the British Empire is it in any sense derogatory to God?'<sup>28</sup> Max himself wrote 'history has much to say about imperialism, not all of it bad', and God's hand for good, despite the ambiguities, was present in the *pax Brittanica* as in the *pax Romana*.<sup>29</sup>

Central to all history stood the figure of Jesus, his life, death and resurrection, but Max emphasized 'Jesus was no *avatar*, a sudden appearing . . . he came in the fulfilment of time . . . the time has come (Mk. 1:14-15)'. He was anxious to stress our Lord's own awareness of standing within the broad sweep of a historical movement. He too saw his place in time. He saw history 'steadily and he saw it whole', 'sanctified by the presence and purposeful activity of God'. Jesus did not so much *bring* meaning to history as 'bring to full realisation a meaning which history already possessed'. To some continental theologians, Max was held to have brought a welcome emphasis on eschatology to bear on Anglo-Saxon theology, for example, through his book *The Truth of Vision*. He was certainly aware of the importance of eschatology: 'history without eschatology is in the strictest sense without meaning'<sup>30</sup> but he himself disclaimed over much emphasis on this, preferring to judge that his greatest influence had been through the essentially historical perspective he brought to bear.<sup>31</sup>

Max disliked strongly the term 'church-history', as leading again to the fatal dichotomy between the sacred and life. He exhorted the principals of the Anglican Theological colleges on this subject in a paper of 1962, preferring the term 'the Church in history'. To speak otherwise was to him to create 'a completely artificial distinction within the Church's own life and to distort its relation to mankind. I could wish that we might have as the title of this subject in the curriculum "The Church in history."<sup>32</sup> Dr. Haaramaki, in his thesis, is probably right to discern a similarity in Max's understanding with Arnold Toynbee's philosophy of history, where the future belongs always with 'creative minorities', whether or not Max explicitly stated this. For Max, whether in Church or State, there is need always for 'organs of initiative' and so for 'voluntary associations'; and this is as true in his appreciations of the Welfare State, as Beveridge had intended it to be, as it was for the missionary work of the church. He himself had early discerned the crucial importance of the new 'Social Service State' for the future both at home and abroad: the Church in the Welfare State, represented for him 'the voluntary principle and is its main guardian'.<sup>33</sup> Within the Church, the missionary societies represented that same voluntary principle of initiative, flexibility and spontaneity. The urge to centralize and absorb them must be resisted at all costs. This antipathy to centralizing bureaucracy lay at the root of his well chronicled resistance to the merger between the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches.<sup>34</sup> He wrote: 'the strength of a democratic community is the strength of its voluntary associations' and 'the voluntary association has a vital contribution to make to the life of the Church no less than the life of the State.'<sup>35</sup> Tidiness of organization was *anathema* to him as so easily spelling 'the creeping paralysis of death'.<sup>36</sup>

In a famous phrase Lessing wrote that 'the accidental truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason'. Max was

unafraid of the particularities, even the smallest particularities, of history and their relation to Christian truth. How much more significant was Judaea to Babylon, for all the latter's contemporary size and importance.<sup>37</sup> When we have learned not to despise the day of small things we have learned a proper attitude to history, 'for, if God (is) in the little things, then *a fortiori* he is to be discovered at work in the tumultuous events of life'. Like Jesus himself, the entrance of the Christian mission is always particular, and we can only generalize about salvation because it has been particularized in time and place.<sup>38</sup> He was well aware, in inter-religious debate, how this set the Christian apart from, for example, an exponent of Hinduism like Dr. Radhakrishnan,<sup>39</sup> for whom the historical nature of religious reality was of no significance. In his debate with John Hick, to which we shall turn shortly, he criticized what he felt to be the static approach adopted by Hick, in using the concepts of comparative religion, which failed to give due account to the movement of history: 'geography is fundamentally spatial in its thinking. History is concerned with movement. Geography locates a race, a view of life, a nexus of custom at the point A. History shows members of that race "on the move"'.<sup>40</sup>

At this point it is necessary to examine Max's approach to history in the light of some modern criticism. Does he, as Dillistone suggests, in 'his very enthusiasm for history' try to deduce more from historical studies than they could legitimately provide?<sup>41</sup> In a striking image, J. H. Plumb pictured the massive structure of Christian historical interpretation, an inheritance in particular from St. Augustine and his *City of God* as a ruin, in which some few, increasingly very few, historians attempt to shelter.<sup>42</sup> Max has to be seen as one such survivor. Yet it is difficult to see how a believing Christian, who happens to be a practising historian, can avoid a historiography which locates the acts of God in certain paradigmatic events in history; which in turn gives rise to a view of history which may not be identical with St. Augustine's but will bear many similarities to it. E. H. Carr, like Plumb an eminent practising historian, found it 'hard to reconcile the integrity of history with belief in some super historical force in which its meaning and significance depend—whether that force be the God of a Chosen People, a Christian God, the Hidden Hand of the Deist or Hegel's World Spirit—the historian must solve his problems without resource to any such *deus ex machina*' 'so far as I am concerned I have no belief in Divine Providence, world spirit . . . or any of the other abstractions which have sometimes been supposed to guide the course of events'.<sup>43</sup> But the Christian historian whose *Weltanschauung* includes a belief that a force of this kind has touched his own life and is at work in history, is then presented, not so much with a difficulty over the integrity of history, as over his own personal integrity. Whether or not he can discern the hand of God with the directness of a St. Luke in *Acts*, he cannot discount a factor he has come to believe to be true and significant. Karl Popper in *The Open*

*Society*, as E. H. Carr in the work cited, both commended Karl Barth for detaching theology from history and handing it over to the secular arm. Max would have agreed with Alan Richardson's protest. While faith in God is essential, if we are to discern his activity in events, 'to say that Christian truth cannot be attained by historical enquiry apart from the insight of faith is a very different thing from saying that the historical facts which criticism can investigate are irrelevant to Christian belief.'<sup>44</sup> Richardson added that history, like theology, involved decisions of faith, from which historians are not exempt by means of critical techniques: 'in this matter as in others every man is . . . "his own historian"'. So, the 'point of view' is inescapably part of the interpreter and his subjectivity.<sup>45</sup> It can be argued that we can be more at ease when the interpreter's standpoint is known and declared, as was the case with Max, than when it operates covertly or unconsciously to determine what the historian singles out as significant. For Max, the practice of history was a mental discipline of enormous importance: it constituted a 'form of obedience', a 'structure of life', as it had for Habakkuk. And the great need for our generation was to acquire this outlook which gave meaning to history for us: 'for our storm tossed generation it is the prophetic outlook that we need, the profound conviction we have to recover that history is not a tale full of sound and fury, signifying nothing but a record of the activity of God—and all this at the institutional as well as at the personal level.'<sup>46</sup>

### The Uniqueness of Christ

In the last period of his life (1963-77) Max became increasingly concerned with questions raised by other religions. The *Newsletters* of the late 1950s had given space to the renaissance of the great religions of Buddhism (June 1956), Islam (October 1956) and Hinduism (November 1956 and January 1957). Max expressed his debt to Kenneth Cragg's book, *The Call of the Minaret*, with its sensitive approach to men of other faith, here to Muslims but applicable to those in other contexts.<sup>47</sup> He himself was editor of the *Christian Presence* series, which contained similarly thoughtful approaches by George Appleton (Buddhists), Cragg, J. V. Taylor (African religion) and others in the 1960s. Max expressed himself as fully committed to the method of dialogue and based his approach on Christ's prior presence wherever the Christian might meet another. Not only had God left himself nowhere without witness, but Christ had gone before any proclamation of him. Here was a view of the universal Christ, cosmic in range, awaiting discovery, as much by the Christian's dialogue with the best in another's religious tradition as by the adherent of another faith. Such men Max refused to define by what they were not: a man must be described positively as what he was, not stigmatized as a non-Christian or a member of a non-Christian religion. 'The essential missionary task of the church in all ages is to unveil the Lord who is already there.'<sup>48</sup> 'The Christian is not to take Christ to some

place from which he is absent but to go out into all the world and discover Christ there . . . to uncover the unknown Christ.<sup>49</sup>

In the 1970s John Hick proposed a 'Copernican revolution' in theology. Briefly, whereas in the past, all religion had been thought, at least by Christians, to revolve round the Christian revelation, even as Ptolemy had understood all the planets to revolve around the earth in a geo-centric universe, now theology, on Hick's proposal, needed to put God at the centre of its picture, as the sun was at the centre of Copernicus' cosmogony, and realize that God was to be found in all the religious traditions, one of which was the experience of salvation found in Christ. Hick wrote: 'in its essence Christianity is the way of life and salvation which has its origin in the Christ event. It will continue as a way of salvation . . . the needed Copernican revolution is when there is a shift from the dogma that Christianity is at the centre to the realization that it is God who is at the centre and that all the religions of mankind, including our own, . . . revolve around him'. Hick also suggested that Jesus' incarnation should be viewed as the language of mythology and that a positive re-evaluation should be given to the use of impersonal language to express the sense of 'the infinite reality' of God.<sup>50</sup>

Here was a whole range of issues with which Max felt compelled to grapple in his role as a missionary theologian. His main treatment of the questions, which Dillistone rightly regarded as one of the best things that he ever wrote, can be found in the journal *Modern Churchman* of March 1974.<sup>51</sup> In his article he quoted J. M. Creed, the Cambridge theologian of an earlier generation, to the effect that, whereas Christian theology did not need to claim that it contained all truth of religious value, it was committed to the view that 'in Christ it had found the deepest truth of God'. Not to do so was for the Church to lose itself.<sup>52</sup> From this point Max argued that the uniqueness to which he was committed was essentially inclusive. Jesus' relationship to God as 'Abba', father, is distinctive but in this relationship he is Man, inclusive Man, relating to God. Max is prepared to accept the Copernican revolution where this means displacing the religion, Christianity (*vide* Hick above) from the centre. For such a religion can easily degenerate into idolatry, and so invite God's judgement, as any other religion, a view familiar to readers of Barth or Hendrik Kraemer. Max then made a move which was characteristic but vulnerable to Hick's response: 'I want to argue that Christianity being removed from the centre the new centre is not a theological term—God—but an historical person, Jesus, in whom God is to be recognized as uniquely revealed.' He repudiated absolutely Hick's view of the incarnation, as was to be expected of one in whose position the *historical* Christ was of such importance: 'I do not for one moment believe that you can have a theology of religion in the "Divine as non Personal" and then go on to take the Incarnation as being, strictly speaking, a theological way of speaking about an incommunicable mystery'. But to emphasize the incarnation was not to do so *exclusively*. if

so, why did Jesus himself speak of those 'who will come from east and west and north and south and sit down in the kingdom'? He gave full recognition to authentic experience of God outside the Christian tradition but it is still 'Christ who saves', known or unknown. The principle of life and death and life again, implicit in other religions, is explicit in Christian faith.<sup>54</sup>

Max had here combined two threads, both present in the New Testament, but usually separated in his own expositions. First, the special significance of a historical Christology, Jesus as the man among men who reveals God uniquely and, with this, the universal and cosmic Christ, the one through whom all authentic experience of God is mediated wherever it is found, and often unrecognized by the recipient. Hick accused him of a 'profound unclarity' in the attempt to replace God by the Jesus of history as a way of coming to terms with the proposed Copernican revolution. But Hick accepted that, if Christ be thought of as the Universal Logos, then a Copernican revolution was still possible. In the interests of his own view, what Hick could not accept was the historical Jesus still at the centre.<sup>54</sup> Max's reply, printed in Dillistone's book at Appendix II, was to write that he had come to the view that 'uniqueness' as a category, without very careful definition, did not express the truth of our Lord's position. He preferred a 'saving distinctiveness', 'valid for all men': 'it is this which justifies Christians witnessing to this conviction before all men'. He quoted Michael Ramsey's phrase 'God is Christlike and in Him is nothing unChristlike at all' and refers to our Lord as 'the most comprehensive model' (of God) presented to man's religious awareness.<sup>55</sup>

There is much else of great value in this printed debate, notably (as we have seen above) Max's insistence on a dynamic and historical view of the universe of faiths, which looks towards the future in movement, and a movement of *convergence*, in terms of the New Testament the looking forward in hope to the one who is coming, 'Ho Erchomenos'. What Wilfred Cantwell Smith has called 'Participation', the inter-penetration of religions, was in his mind, one suspects, as he wrote of civilizations needing to be 'mongrelized' in order to survive. The danger of Hick's method was to solidify into past categories of comparative religion, rather than to recognize that, in a world of increasingly one history 'there is a dynamic at work which makes for convergence'. As he was to write in *I believe in the Great Commission*, his last book, religious convergence centred increasingly on the figure of Jesus. In the words of M. M. Thomas the Indian theologian, whom he quoted here: 'it is not the mystic Christ but the historical Jesus who has made the deepest impact upon Hinduism.'<sup>56</sup>

## Conclusion

C. P. Snow is reported to have said of Rutherford that, like all great scientists, he had the future in his bones. To read Max's newsletters, even

at this range, is to realize that, at least in the short term, this was profoundly true of him as in interpreter of events. A very much longer perspective will be required to judge whether his vision of the historical person of Jesus in whom salvation is distinctively present, is the one on whom the religions of the world will converge. In his own words, 'the paradox of a true eschatology is that we are part of a future which has already happened while actually engaged upon a future which still has to be fulfilled'.<sup>57</sup> Meanwhile, Max represented a significant strand of evangelical tradition, biblical in outlook and in doctrine, evangelical in theology, open-minded to the discovery of truth and generous in its welcome towards all who were prepared to accept the unqualified description of 'evangelical'.<sup>58</sup>

## NOTES

- 1 M. Warren, *Crowded Canvas*, Hodder and Stoughton (H & S), London 1974; F. W. Dillistone, *Into All the World*, H & S, London 1980; F. W. Dillistone, 'The Legacy of Max Warren', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 5, 1981, pp 114-7. There are theses by P. G. C. Meiring (Pretoria 1968), Fr. F. E. Furey (Louvain 1974) and Dr. O. Haaramaki (Helsinki 1982) all available at The Church Missionary Society (CMS), 157 Waterloo Road, London.
- 2 T. E. Yates, *A College Remembered*, St. John's College, Durham 1982.
- 3 Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union (CICCU); Inter-Varsity Fellowship (IVF); Student Christian Movement (SCM); and Student Volunteer Missionary Union (SVMU).
- 4 O. R. Barclay, *Whatever happened to the Jesus Lane Lot?* IVP, Leicester 1977, p 118: 'In the early 1920's the lines between CICCU and the SCM had been definite but not so tightly drawn as to prevent some of the leaders from holding office in both societies (eg Stephen Neill and Max Warren)' cf. p 164 note 63.
- 5 Warren, *op. cit.*, p.40.
- 6 *What is an Evangelical?* Church Bookroom Press, London 1944, pp 3-5. W. E. S. Holland had acted as Director of the Archbishops' Campaign for Christian Service in 1918 and so travelled round the dioceses (p 3).
- 7 *Interpreters*, Highway Press, London 1936, pp 3-4.
- 8 Bishop J. R. S. Taylor in his foreword to Max's book *Strange Victory*, Canterbury Press, London 1946, pp 5-6.
- 9 *The Ministry of the Word*, Canterbury Press, London 1945.

- 10 K. Grubb, et. al., *Evangelicals Affirm*, Church Book Room Press, London 1948 essay by W. F. P. Chadwick on 'The Sacraments' p 156. The full list of contributors was Grubb, Coggan, Green, Earnshaw Smith (then Rector of All Souls Langham Place, where John Stott was his curate), C. C. Kerr, Warren, J. P. Hickinbotham, F. J. Taylor, Stibbs, Chadwick, F. S. Allison, D. R. Wigram, J. G. Tiarks, G. Goyder, J. H. Cruse, L. F. E. Wilkinson, W. M. F. Scott, C. S. Milford, Miss V. Grubb, Berners Wilson.
- 11 Report to the Archbishop, *The Fulness of Christ*, SPCK, London 1950. The joint authors of *The Fulness of Christ* included some of those who contributed to *Evangelicals Affirm*. So, in common were Allison, Coggan, Hickinbotham, Scott, Taylor and Warren; others were H. Chadwick, S. L. Greenslade, D. E. W. Harrison, H. C. G. Herklots, G. H. G. Hewitt, G. W. H. Lampe, C. F. D. Moule, S. C. Neill, E. Steinly, J. P. Thornton-Duesbury and R. R. Williams.
- 12 *Durham Johanian*, 6, 1952, pp 6-11. Personal conversation with Bishop Stephen Neill has underlined to the writer how anxious these writers were to distance themselves from the wilder vagaries of the Liberal Evangelicals like E. W. Barnes, while remaining sympathetic to a biblical scholar like V. F. Storr.
- 13 Cf. *Sevenfold Secret* SPCK, London 1962, pp 13-16 where he commends Scott's essay in *Evangelicals Affirm* pp 59-67. On the more general theological basis see Max's article in *Churchman* 53, 1939 p 77: 'we have oversimplified salvation by suggesting that salvation consists in a transaction between God and a man's soul. That is pietism. And pietism is not Evangelical Christianity. Evangelical Christianity is nourished on the objective word of God and not on the subjective adventures of the soul.'
- 14 CMS Archives: Warren Papers Collection 4.
- 15 Dillistone, op. cit., p 60; cf. on EFTL, *Crowded Canvas*, p 223.
- 16 *The Sevenfold Secret*, p 1.
- 17 Warren to Richard Kew 1 October 1975. CMS Archives Warren Papers Box 21. This is an important letter expressing Max's self understanding and giving an interpretation of Anglican Evangelical history 1920-1950 as Max saw it.
- 18 Dillistone has some very perceptive pages on the holding together of full commitment and open mindedness in Max (op. cit., pp 154-6). He mentions the cost to Max then and later (pp 24, 58-9) when his open mindedness seemed to some of his closest friends to be 'unsoundness'. Max's position and general understanding of the whole psychology of evangelicals confronted with modern theology is admirably expressed in his review of James Barr's *Fundamentalism*, SCM, London 1977, in *New Fire* 4, 1977, pp 456-9, where he holds that Barr has confused the simple commitment to Christ of 'brash . . . young conservative evangelicals', like whom he says he once was, for a dogmatic concern with inerrancy of the Bible; he holds that Barr has given 'a wholly disproportionate attention' to the 'supposed influence of . . . theological distortions purveyed by some high Calvinist Princeton theologians' (p 4).
- 19 *The Missionary Movements from Britain in Modern History*, SCM, London 1965; *Social History and Christian Mission*, SCM, London, 1967; .
- 20 *The Calling of God*, Lutterworth, London 1944, p 2.
- 21 *CMS Newsletter* (hereafter *N*) 147, 1953. Max gave 14,000 as the monthly readership of his newsletters (*N* 194, 1957).

- 22 *The Christian Mission*, SCM, London 1951, p 20.
- 23 Furey, unpublished thesis, p 90 note 39; *What is an Evangelical?* p 37.
- 24 N 88, 1947: 'There is indeed a vacuum in her soul. Secularism, with or without a political ideology, is presenting an enormous appeal to her younger generation and to-day that secularism commonly has the driving force of a religion'.
- 25 *Crowded Canvas*, p 99.
- 26 *Interpreting The Cross*, SCM, London 1966, pp 48-9.
- 27 *The Christian Mission*, p 17; cf. *Truth of Vision*, Canterbury Press, London 1948, p 47: 'The Chaldeans of our twentieth century may be less remote from the divine purpose than we are always willing to allow'. N 148 (March 1953): 'He who could use Cyrus can use Mao Tse-Tung. He who fashioned the Assyrians to be the "rod of His anger" can use the Communists to discipline His Church'. 'When we say that Christ is the Lord of History we mean, among other things, that the processes of history, even as they are being worked out in Communist China to-day, are not outside his Lordship'.
- 28 N 139, 1952, p 3.
- 29 *Caesar The Beloved Enemy*, SCM, London 1955, pp 10, 28.
- 30 *Uniqueness of Jesus Christ*, CMS, London 1969, p 6; *International Review of Mission (IRM)* 41, 1952, pp 337-50. cf. *Strange Victory* p 37: 'upon that point (the life of Christ) all history converges'.
- 31 Letter to P. G. C. Meiring, 23 May 1960, CMS Archives, Warren Papers, Box 24.
- 32 *Perspective in Mission*, H & S, London 1964, pp 102-3. The teaching of the subject, following the Armstrong Report, 'The Teaching of History in Ordination Training' (Advisory Council for The Church's Ministry, 1972).
- 33 Haaramaki, unpublished thesis, English abstract p 155; N 32, 1942; 121, 1950; 126, 1951; 183, 1956; *Caesar the Beloved Enemy*, pp 53-4 cf. p 48; *The Christian Mission* p 47: 'humanizing the Social Service State' as part of the Church's mission in the twentieth century, pp 56-7: the Church has to call into being for this purpose 'an active sense of personal responsibility'.
- 34 *Crowded Canvas*, pp 156-160 where he states the need for a critical (and innovative) mind over against the synthetic (or centralizing) mind; *IRM* 72, 1983; pp 267-275, where O. Haaramaki and Lesslie Newbigin correspond on this issue. See Max's essay in the Festschrift of 1978 for Dr. J. Verkuyl, *Zending op weg naar de Toekomst*, pp 190-202 and his judgement in the McGavran-Warren correspondence that the merger proved 'disastrous' *Church Growth Bulletin* 11, 1975, p 466ff.
- 35 *East and West Review*, July 1973, pp 69-76; N 256, 1963, where he quoted Lord Beveridge, architect of the British Welfare State; *Truth of Vision*, p 142: 'initiative . . . the abrupt contradiction of the secular world's practice of concentrating power at the centre.'
- 36 *The Christian Mission*, p 76; N 236: 'Christian strategic thinking (must be) flexible . . . and never, never, never trying to be tidy!': cf. his preference for Celtic against Roman mission revealed in his review pamphlet of Canon J. McCleod Campbell's *Christian History in the Making*, Church Assembly, London 1946, entitled *Iona and Rome* (1946), CMS Archives, Warren Papers
- 37 N 128, 1951, p 7.

- 38 *Interpreting the Cross*, p 48; *The Christian Mission*, p 37; *Gospel of Victory*, SCM, London 1955, p 33.
- 39 Editor's foreword to W. Stewart's *India's Religious Frontier*, SCM, London 1964 in the *Christian Presence* series p 15ff: 'Dr. Radhakrishnan can say it is immaterial whether Krishna is a historical figure or not. The Christian . . . has no such option with Jesus Christ' Cf. Prism pamphlet no. 30 'The Relationship between Christ and the Other Religions', p 4.
- 40 'The Uniqueness of Christ' *Modern Churchman* 18, p 63.
- 41 Dillistone, op. cit., p 203.
- 42 J. H. Plumb, *The Death of the Past*, Macmillan, London 1969, pp 102-3.
- 43 E. H. Carr, *What is History*, Macmillan, London 1961, p 69 cf. p 43.
- 44 Carr, op. cit., p 69; A. Richardson, *History Sacred and Profane*, SCM, London 1964, pp 138-9.
- 45 Richardson, op. cit., pp 212, 259; cf. S. W. Sykes and J. P. Clayton eds., *Christ, Faith and History*, CUP, Cambridge 1972, pp 172-3 where Richardson is critically appraised but the substantive point is made that Croce, described here as the 'doyen of idealist philosophers of history', had pointed out that, even were history comparable, not to the portrait painter, but to the photographer, he too has a point of view, or angle, from which he stands to take his picture.
- 46 *Interpreting the Cross*, p 51; *The Christian Mission*, p 12; cf. *The Day of the Preacher*, Mowbray, London 1967, p 44.
- 47 References to Cragg's book (OUP, New York 1956) occur frequently, usually commending it for reading: N 192, 1957; 195, 1957; 209, 1958; 213, 1959; 234, 1961; 258, 1963 when it is said to be basic for study at theological colleges, and 262, 1963. cf. also *I Believe in the Great Commission*, H & S, London 1976, p 165.
- 48 *Crowded Canvas* p 136; Prism Pamphlet 30, p 16; *Challenge and Response*, SPCK, London 1960, p 66; *Perspective in Mission*, pp 21, 41, cf. p 32: 'we do not only go with Christ. We meet Christ in those to whom we go'.
- 49 *Modern Churchmen*, loc. cit., p 64.
- 50 J. Hick, *God and the Universe of Faiths*, Macmillan, London 1973, pp 119, 131, 144.
- 51 Dillistone, op. cit., p 202; *Modern Churchman* as note 33.
- 52 J. M. Creed, *The Divinity of Christ*, CUP, Cambridge 1938, p 113 quoted at p 59.
- 53 *Modern Churchman*, loc. cit., pp 61, 63-4. cf. *Challenge and Response*, p 55 where uniqueness lies not in Christianity but in God's revelation in Christ.
- 54 *Modern Churchman*, loc. cit., pp 65-66; printed also in Dillistone, op. cit., pp 239-242.
- 55 Max however returned to the use of the term in *I believe in the Great Commission*, p 75.
- 56 *I believe in the Great Commission*, p 168. cf. Max's comment in Stewart, *India's Religious Frontier*, p 16: 'Men discover the presence of Christ not only in the Church in India but in the very life of India itself, inextricably part of the quest of modern Hinduism'.
- 57 *IRM*, loc. cit., at p 332 note 23. Fr. Furey concluded that Max was a 'contemporary Deuteronomist trying to make sense of the confusion of contemporary upheavals in the light of God's plan for the world', unpublished thesis, p 144. Cf. Max's own statement of his aims in the first newsletter that he wrote N 31, July 1942 to 'consider the meaning of some

- of the things that are happening and so be in a position of spiritual leadership . . . no small part of what the Bible means by a prophet'.
- 58 Support for Max's position from an evangelical scholar of a different denomination can be found in F. F. Bruce's book, *In Retrospect*, Pickering and Inglis, London 1980 where he wrote: 'in this country evangelicals generally (and rightly) prefer to be unhyphenated evangelicals' (p 278) and again 'I am always happy to be called an evangelical, although I insist on being an unqualified evangelical. I do not willingly answer, for example, to such a designation as "conservative evangelical"' (p 309).

**The Revd. Dr. Tim Yates** is Rector of Darley Dale, Matlock, Derbyshire and Diocesan Director of Ordinands in the Derby Diocese.