

Clio or St. Luke ?
When the Evangelist becomes the Historian: A Former Evangelical's
concerns about contemporary Evangelical Historiography.

Part Two: The Nature of An American Evangelical Historiography

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Part Two: The Nature of An American Evangelical Historiography

The development of American Evangelical historiography has generally dominated the historiographical agendas of Australian and British Evangelical historians.¹ By examining the American situation, one can gain a fair understanding of Evangelical historiography as it exists anywhere in the world. The earliest of the Old American Evangelical historiographical source comes the Reformed tradition in a classic fundamentalist mode - Gordon H. Clark, a Professor of Philosophy at Wheaton College.² Clark had taught at the University of Pennsylvania until 1936. In 1936, Clark had followed J. Greham Machen, the famous Presbyterian separatist, into the schismatic Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Upon taking up his position in Wheaton, Clark became an influential mentor to the younger generation of scholars that would lead Neo-Evangelicalism from Fuller Theological Seminary, including Carl Henry, Harold Lindsell, Edward Carnell, and Paul Jewett. Clark trained these influence Evangelical leaders in a strict Calvinist scholasticism. He was, however, to be deeply disappointed when the younger generation began to compromise their old fashioned Calvinism with modern biblical criticism and philosophical existentialism to maintain intellectual credibility with the contemporary age. Clark had produced a Christian philosophy of history in his major work, *A Christian View of Men and Things* published in 1952.³ Clark's historiography takes up an unrepentant ideological

¹Space does not allow for a full development of the particularities of Australian and British Evangelical historiographies. It is hoped that further articles may be forthcoming on these particular areas. Nevertheless, it is true that, with the Americanisation in the global Evangelical sub-culture, Evangelical historians, outside the United States, are largely guided by the agendas of American Evangelical historiography.

²Sources on Gordon H. Clark are from George Marsden. *Reforming Fundamentalism*. Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism. Grand Rapids. Eerdmans. 1987. pp. 45-46, 78, 97, 184, 195.

³Gordon H. Clark. *A Christian View of Men and Things*. Grand Rapids. William B. Eerdmans. 1952. A critique of this work is found in John Warwick Montgomery. *Where is History Going ?*. Minneapolis. Bethany House Publishers. 1969.

position. Its philosophical based is a Neo-Calvinist form of scholasticism called "Christian Presuppositionalism". It was first developed by the Dutch Reformed theologian, Abraham Kuyper, and later systematised by the American Presbyterian-separatist theologian, Cornelius Van Til. Such presuppositionalism states that all thought is either Christian or Non-Christian. For Van Till, a Professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary (1930-1975), presuppositionalism is the understanding that all thought is developed from one of the following two presuppositions - The Bible is the inerrant Word of God, The Bible is not the inerrant Word of God.⁴

Van Till's Presuppositionalism produced another philosopher-come-historian who was to be extremely influential in the international Evangelical community, Francis A. Schaeffer. In the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s, Schaeffer dominated the world of Evangelical-published paperbacks with apologetical arguments for Evangelical Christianity; many of his early works were published by Inter-Varsity Press. Schaeffer was well-known in the Evangelical sub-culture for his classic statement on modern history in *How Should We Then Live*.⁵ For Schaeffer, the history of the world has been a movement of decline from the time of the Reformation. The Reformation is seen, by Schaeffer, as a one of the few high points in human history. The European world had recovered ultimate truth in Reformed religion. Thus, for Schaeffer, the history of the modern world is a process of decline as the European world shifted further away from the "truths" of the Reformation. Schaeffer states that in each discipline of learning, during the modern era, there is a switch from the clear thinking of the Reformation to the mad ambiguity of modernity. Thus, for Schaeffer, as

⁴For understanding of historiography from a Van Tilian perspective, consult C. Gregg Singer. "The Problem of Historical Interpretation" in Gary North. *Foundation of Christian Scholarship*. Essays in the Van Til Perspective. Vallecito. Ross House Books. 1979.

⁵Francis Schaeffer. *How Should We Then Live*. Old Tappan. Revell. 1976.

well as for Clark, and for the Evangelical scholars that follow them, Modernity, in every form, is the enemy.

In the 1970s, while Schaeffer was lamenting our present historical decline, there emerged more critical thinking Evangelical historians who were eager to see the history of Evangelicalism written by Evangelicals, but with intellectual credibility within the wider academic community. One of the first works of these Evangelical historians was a collection of essays edited by John D. Woodbridge and David Wells called *The Evangelicals: What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing*, published in 1975.⁶ The book contained historical essays from both Evangelical and Non-Evangelical scholars; the Evangelical historians were George Marsden and Robert D. Linder, and the Non-Evangelical historians were John H. Gerstner, Martin E. Marty, and Sydney E. Ahlstrom. In 1979, a second work came out written completely by Evangelical scholars. It was called *The Gospel in America: Themes in the Story of America's Evangelical*, written by John D. Woodbridge, Mark A. Noll, and Nathan O. Hatch.⁷ Whereas the first book, although superficial in parts, was generally insightful, this second book was clearly second-rate scholarship. Its view was that the American heroes were those who defend the bible from criticism, and therefore, the villains were those who diminished the value of the bible - a very ideological interpretation of what suppose to be the "story of America's Evangelicals". The book was published by Zondervan, a populist Evangelical publisher, definitely not a credible publisher for what was supposed to be seen as scholarship. Possibly, the book's failure to impress could be also put down to the influence of Woodbridge. Although not a Classic Fundamentalist, like his father, Charles Woodbridge, John

⁶David F. Wells and John D. Woodbridge (Ed). *The Evangelicals: What They Believe, Who They Are, Where They Are Changing*. Nashville. Abingdon Press. 1975.

⁷John D. Woodbridge, Mark A Noll, and Nathan O. Hatch. *The Gospel in America*. Themes in the Story of American Evangelicals. Grand Rapids. Zondervan. 1979.

Woodbridge was, nevertheless, one of the more militant conservatives among the Neo-Evangelicals.⁸

While Evangelical historians were attempting to write their history, Evangelical philosophers were attempting a revision of the Christian philosophy that Gordon Clark had left. The two notable Evangelical philosophers who made an impression on the Evangelical world were John W. Montgomery and Ronald Nash. Montgomery, first Professor of Church History and Christian Thought at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Deerfield, Illinois), and then Professor of Jurisprudence at the Simon Greenleaf School of Law (Orange, California), produced a two-volume study on a Christian view of history called *Where is History Going ?*, published in 1969, and *The Shape of the Past*, published in 1975.⁹ With eight earned degrees, including a M.A. from Berkeley, M.Phil. in Law from Essex, a Ph.D from Chicago, and the Doctorat d'Universite' from Strasbourg, Montgomery is possibly the most highest educated Evangelical. His philosophy of history is something to be contend with. He sensibly rejects Clark's Calvinistic presuppositionalism, but continues to defend Evangelical orthodoxy (which is based on the view of the Bible being inerrant) by demonstrating the philosophical problems in every other alternative system to the Evangelical faith.¹⁰ Of course, what he fail to do is to inform the reader what philosophical problems may be demonstrated in his own Christian philosophy of history.

One Evangelical philosopher who has been honest enough to face up to

⁸This view is confirmed in Marsden. *Reforming Fundamentalism*. pp. 286-287.

⁹John W. Montgomery. *Where is History Going ?*. Minneapolis. Bethany House Publishers. 1969; John W. Montgomery. *The Shape of the Past*. Minneapolis. Bethany House Publishers. 1975.

¹⁰John W. Montgomery. *Where is History Going ?*. p. 43.

the philosophical problems that exist in the Evangelical's Christian philosophy of history is Ronald Nash, Professor of Philosophy at Western Kentucky University.¹¹ His book, *Christian Faith and Historical Understanding* (1984), although published by Zondervan, is a refreshing examination of the philosophical problems that underlay both Christian and Non-Christian historical writing.¹² Nash hits out that what he calls "Hard Objectivism", evident in Old Evangelical historiography, and "Hard Relativism", evident in the historiography of the Post-Modernists. The answer for Nash is the rejection of extreme objectivism and extreme subjectivism, for what he calls "Soft Objectivism", or "Soft Relativism". This is all very well, but Nash fails to reason why the Christian faith would be able to achieve this resolution for historiography any more than other ideological positions.

The Evangelical scholars we have examined, so far, have been educated in the Reformed tradition. It has been the Reformed tradition that has provided Classic Fundamentalism and Neo-Evangelicalism with an intellectual framework. There has been no notable Classic Fundamentalist, nor Neo-Evangelical, scholar in the Holiness tradition prior to the entry of Timothy Smith. Smith falls much more easily into the category of the New Evangelical Historiography (examined further on) in a period when the Old Evangelical historiography was dominant. However, one Classic Fundamentalist historian who has risen from the holiness tradition since Smith, but represented an Old Evangelical historiography rather than the new, is George Dollar. Dollar's *A History of Fundamentalism*, published by Bob Jones University Press in 1973, is the most serious statement by the Fundamentalist themselves on their own

¹¹Nash can, at least, see problems in using history for apologetical purposes in Ronald Nash. "The Use and Abuse of History in Christian Apologetics. *Christian Scholars' Review*. Vol. 1. No. 3. Spring 1971.

¹²Ronald Nash. *Christian Faith and Historical Understanding*. 1984.

history.¹³ When most Evangelical historians write on fundamentalism, they are addressing problems that they wished did not exist in the history of Evangelical Protestantism. When Dollar writes this appraisal of fundamentalism, he see no particular problems, only pride in the Fundamentalist's resilience. From the Classic fundamentalist point of view, it is those who shift from the theological fundamentals that have the problems. This means that a Classic Fundamentalist historian would have to belief that all passages of historical writing in Bible is both inerrant and read literally. With such a mindset, it is little wonder that classic fundamentalism, in the twentieth century, has been largely frozen out of the mainstream of historical scholarship.

Neo-Evangelical historians, although they maintain a view of biblical inerrancy, are willing to admit that the historical writings in the Bible can not always be taken literally. Thus even Neo-Evangelical historians from an evangelistic tradition can be taken much more seriously then their Classic fundamentalist cousins. Prior to the New Evangelical historiography, three such Neo-Evangelical historians are worthy of mention. Kenneth Scott Latourette, a professor of Missions and Oriental History at Yale University, was celebrated hero in the Evangelical world for his voluminous works that chronicled the history of Christian missions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Latourette's historiography appealed to the Evangelical mind for it romanticised the Evangelical zeal to which missionaries sought to convert the heathen. Latourette is also well known for his 1949 article entitled "The Christian Understanding of History" which appeared in *The American Historical Review*.¹⁴ The article belongs to a dynamic period of religious historiography from 1929 to 1949,

¹³George Dollar. *A History of Fundamentalism*. Bob Jones University Press. 1973.

¹⁴Kenneth Scott Latourette. "The Christian Understanding of History" . *The American Historical Review*. Vol. 54. No. 2. January 1949.

when Christopher Dawson, H.G. Wood, Paul Tillich, Nicholas Berdyaev, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Herbert Butterfield asked the question of what is the Christian understanding of history.¹⁵ Latourette differs to these other religious historians in that his statement of a Christian understanding of history is coloured by his American Evangelicalism. Arguing that Jesus exalted the individual, never engaged in politics, ignored the social structures of mankind, Latourette presents a "Christian historiography" that is confined by his American individualism and Evangelical pietism.¹⁶ Latourette largely takes "The Great Men of History" approach which list the male Christian heroes of faith as evidence of Christianity positive contribution to human history.¹⁷ Latourette gives the standard arguments that characterise the old Evangelical historiography. He states that Western Europe is declining because its Christianity is declining, when at the same time, "nations, notably the United States,...are still continuing the expansion of the Occident", implying that, in the spread of western culture, "Christianity has been the a major factor".¹⁸ The evidence Latourette offers for his argument are the well-worn catch-cries of popular Evangelicalism (associated with the "Heroes of Faith" mentality) - the Evangelical campaign for the abolition of slavery (ie. Wilberforce and Finney), and the benevolence of Christian missions (ie. David Livingstone).¹⁹

J. Edwin Orr, Professor at Fuller's School of World Mission, is considered to be the Evangelical historian of revivalism. He achieved this unofficial

¹⁵Further discussion on this point is given in Appendix 1 Notes: The Religious Historiography and its Essential Contribution to Evangelical Historiography.

¹⁶Latourette. *The Christian Understanding of History*. pp. 268-269.

¹⁷*Ibid.* p. 274.

¹⁸*Ibid.* p. 272.

¹⁹*Ibid.* pp. 273-274.

title through five volumes he produced that claim to record the history of Evangelical awakening around the world. Orr is a wonderful example of how idealistic American scholars interpret the rest of the world through their Americanised rose colour glasses. Orr's *Evangelical Awakening in the South Seas* rewrites Australian religious history in a way that would horrify any serious Australian religious historian.²⁰ As Orr would have it, religious revivals have sweep across this nation, not once, but three times.²¹ Given that one of these "revivals" involved himself as a visiting Evangelist to our shores in the 1950s raises some questions of Orr's objectiveness. He, at least, demonstrates clearly that he has not comprehended that Evangelical activities in the Australian society elicit a far different response than that in the United States.

John Pollock should be mentioned in passing. He is not really a historian, but strictly a biographer; the authorised biographer of Billy Graham in fact. As a great apologist for Graham, Pollock has gone to great lengths in his biography called *Billy Graham*, published in 1966, to defuse the critique that William G. McLoughlin had done on Graham six years before (1960).²² McLoughlin, one of the best historians on revivalism, had demonstrated Graham's more fallible dimensions in *Billy Graham: Revivalist in a Secular Age*.²³ Pollock's attempt to protect the great Evangelical icon from closer scrutiny, is typical of the Old Evangelical historiography. New Evangelical

²⁰J. Edwin Orr. *Evangelical Awakenings in the South Seas*. Minneapolis. Bethany Fellowship. 1976.

²¹Orr's three Australian Evangelical awakenings are the "1859 revival" (linked with the crusades of William Taylor and Thomas Spurgeon), an "Australasian awakening 1889-1912" (linked with the crusades of John MacNeil, R.A. Torrey-Charles Alexander, Florence Young's "Kanaka", and J. Wilbur Chapman-Charles Alexander), and the "Post-World War II revival" (linked to the 1950s crusades of Orr himself, Alan Walker, Oral Roberts, and Billy Graham) Orr. *Evangelical Awakenings in the South Seas*. pp. 49-63, 105-115, 161-176.

²²John Pollock. *Billy Graham*. The authorised biography. London. Hodder & Stoughton. 1966.

²³William G. McLoughlin. *Billy Graham*. Revivalist in a Secular Age. New York. The Ronald Press Company. 1960.

historiography was the opening of the door to critical scholarship which was prepared to start to discard apologetical agendas, in order to write more accurate histories. An early precursor to future New Evangelical Histories was Timothy Smith's *Revivalism and Social Reform*, published in 1957. As Smith stated in the preface of this book:

The purpose of historical study is to explore fully and summarise accurately what really happened in the past. Scholars do not pretend to have achieved absolute objectivity, any more than the oldtime Methodist preachers who professed sanctification meant to claim sinless perfection. Accuracy and impartiality are, however, the historian's cherished goals. It happens that I hold deep affection for the faith of the revivalists whose labors this book recounts. Had this not been so, the volume would very likely not have written. But my intent has been to get the facts straight. Unless Christianity is dependent upon propaganda, its case is better served when historians hew to this line as best they can, letting the chips fall where they may.²⁴

Smith, a Professor of History at John Hopkins University, was somewhat before his time, writing thirty years before the New Evangelical historiography was to emerge as a significant force within Evangelical scholarship.

It could be said that the New Evangelical Historiography began to evolve between the beginning of 1970 and the end of 1974, when four major works came out of the American Evangelical community, Richard Pierard's *The Unequal Yoke* (1970), David Moberg's *The Great Reversal* (1972), Donald Bloesch's *The Evangelical Renaissance* (1973), and Richard Quebedeux's *The Young Evangelical* (1974). These were written more in the fashion of a populist historical sociology rather than academic religious history.²⁵ These works were a type of foundation to the New Evangelical Historiography without being New Evangelical historiography proper. Quebedeux

²⁴Timothy Smith. *Revivalism and Social Reform*. American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War. New York. Harper Torchbooks. 1965 (Abingdon Press 1957). p. 10.

²⁵Richard Pierard. *The Unequal Yoke*. Evangelical Christianity and Political Conservatism. Philadelphia. J.B. Lippincott. 1970; David Moberg. *The Great Reversal*. Evangelism versus Social Concern. Philadelphia. J.B. Lippincott. 1972; Donald Bloesch. *The Evangelical Renaissance*. Grand Rapids. Eerdmans. 1973; and Richard Quebedeux. *The Young Evangelical*. Revolution in Orthodoxy. New York. Harper & Row. 1974. One may also wish to include in this list a less known work, Richard Mouw. *Political Evangelism*. Grand Rapids. Eerdmans. 1973.

and Moberg are seen as Evangelical sociologists of Evangelicalism, and while Pierard and Bloesch are historians, their works could not be regarded as belonging to the mainstream of religious history. Nevertheless, the major works of these four scholars have had enormous influence on the New Evangelical historiography, enough to be classified here within the framework of New Evangelical historiography; bearing in mind that its more populist sociological approach falls short of the rigours expected in the academic discipline of religious history.

The four texts of Pierard, Moberg, Bloesch, and Quebedeaux signalled within the Evangelical sub-culture the arrival of the Young Evangelical revolution that had been taking place in American Evangelicalism.²⁶ This was a revolution that opened up the Evangelical community to a period of self-criticism. The old orthodoxies were openly questioned, and re-interpreted, without leaving the boundaries of Evangelical orthodoxy itself. The Young Evangelical scholars created a strange schizophrenic world of the present Evangelical flux, where the new generation of Evangelicals have thrown out all the Evangelical certainties, and yet still want to hold on to notions of orthodoxy; where they at once renounce the Evangelical heritage and still acclaim that heritage. They refuse to see that their self-criticism has, in fact, undermined the whole Evangelical paradigm. They have merely restated the criticism that liberal Protestants, all along, have made of Evangelicalism, and yet, they deny that they have shifted out of Evangelical orthodoxy into liberal Protestantism. The sense of remaining within the boundaries of Evangelicalism is conveyed in the sub-title of Quebedeaux's book, "Revolution *in* Orthodoxy".²⁷ The revolution does not go beyond

²⁶John D. Woodbridge, Mark A. Noll, and Nathan O. Hatch. *The Gospel in America*. Themes in the Story of American Evangelicals. Grand Rapids. Zondervan. 1979. p. 244. They also note the contribution of the 1973 Thanksgiving Workshop on Evangelical Social Concern in Chicago which produced the Young Evangelicals' major manifesto, *The Chicago Declaration*, as well as contributions from the Young Evangelicals after 1974, Donald Dayton's *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (1976) and Ronald Sider's *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*. (1977).

²⁷Emphasis added.

orthodoxy. The Young Evangelical revolution, has therefore, given the New Evangelical historiography its self-understanding. In many ways, New Evangelical historiography is an attempt to uncover, within the history of Evangelicalism, a way to legitimise the new self-understanding of the Young Evangelicals.

Apart from Bloesch, who has been identified as part of the Reformed tradition, the Young Evangelical scholars fall much more easily within the category of the Evangelistic tradition.²⁸ The first two texts have a minor link with the Reformed tradition, *The Unequal Yoke*, and *The Great Reversal* were part of the *Evangelical Perspective* series, edited by John Warwick Montgomery (who is noted above as a scholar within the Reformed tradition). *The Great Reversal* also has a minor link with the Holiness tradition, as will emerge later. The Young Evangelical scholars, however, are not concerned about the doctrinal refinement of the Reformed tradition, nor the experiential power of the Holiness tradition. Their revolution rose out of concerns that the evangelistic mission of Evangelicals was being severely hampered by the political conservatism and the general disregard for social dimensions which had characterised Evangelicalism. The sub-title of Moberg's books puts it in terms of people perceiving that there was a conflict of "Evangelism versus Social Concern". Thus it was impossible to evangelise the majority of the young generation who were, in the 1970s, socially conscious, and repulsed by the political conservatism and religious pietism of leading Neo-Evangelicals, such as Billy Graham. Graham may have had a certain appeal to the generation of the 1950s, but by the 1970s, he was more of liability to cause of evangelism than its foremost representative. A revolution was needed in Evangelicalism or else it would fall into the same irrelevancy of its separatistic fundamentalist forbears.

²⁸Douglas Sweeney places Bloesch in his category of those historians from the Reformed tradition. D.A. Sweeney. "The Essential Evangelicalism Dialectic: The Historiography of the Early Neo-Evangelical Movement and the Observer-Participant Dilemma". *Church History*. Vol. 60. 1991. p. 71.

Pierard explained the Young Evangelical revolution in terms of its being possible of breaking the yoke that combined political conservatism and Evangelicalism. Significant to this process was the emergence of a left-wing evangelicalism that came from the Black Evangelical community in their struggle against racism, and young Evangelicals involved in the anti-Vietnam War moratorium. As Pierard demonstrates, the shift of the whole political ethos within the United States from the 1950s to the 1970s, meant that the formative links between Evangelicalism and the ultra-conservatism of the anti-communist demagogues (still mentally living in the 1950s) was an obvious embarrassment. The centre of Evangelicalism began to quickly drop their former associations with the Far Right, and began to highlight their Evangelical "New Left". The result was that Jimmy Carter, an Evangelical President with leanings toward the agendas of the Democratic left, was elected. Of course, when the political ethos once again shifted in the 1980s, with the arrival of the New Christian Right (a reactionary movement within Evangelicalism against the Evangelical left), Carter was dropped, and Evangelical America voted in Ronald Reagan.

Moberg followed up Pierard's analysis by seeking to explain why there had been this yoking of Evangelicalism and political conservatism. Moberg did this by turning to Timothy Smith's argument that there had been "the Great Reversal" in Evangelicalism. The great reversal was the shifting away from a social activism that characterised nineteenth century revivalism. Thus Moberg saw the Young Evangelical revolution as a return back to a previous Evangelical social conscience. The problem is that Moberg's use of conclusions from Smith's more detached *Revivalism and Social Reform* borders on historical revisionism. Moberg overlooks a large gap between the nineteenth century mindset of Smith's revivalists, and a twentieth century mindset of the Young Evangelicals.

Quebedeaux combines the work of Pierard and Moberg, as well as the insights of other Young Evangelicals, such as Donald Bloesch, Tom Skinner, Richard Mouw, William E. Pannell, and Mark Hatfield. Quebedeaux's book is the most detailed description of the Young Evangelical revolution. However, what Quebedeaux's book has shown is that Evangelicalism has been able to move forward, in the late twentieth century, only by taking on board outside influence, thereby, irreversibly changing the centre of Evangelicalism. In the previous age, the Evangelical agendas, such as the abolition of slavery, universal education, welfare for the poor, and temperance, dictated the character of the larger American and British culture. In post-1945 period, it was the agendas of the wider Western secular culture, such as ecumenicalism, social responsibility (meaning state welfare over against religious notions of charity), egalitarianism (including racial and gender equality), feminism (as a total different perspective which means much more than just allowing women to be preachers), dictated the changing character of Evangelicalism. Left to its own intellectual framework (without any contemporary outside influence), Evangelicalism would be nothing but the irrelevancy of separatistic Fundamentalism. By the end of Quebedeaux's book, the reader would wonder how is an historian to reconcile the Evangelical heritage with, what is now, the future of Evangelicalism. It would seem that contemporary Evangelicalism has become something entirely different from orthodox Evangelicalism as it was defined by its previous theologians. One suspects that what we have is not a "Revolution in Orthodox", but a retreat from the collapse of Evangelical dogma. Is it not possible that we have an Evangelical tradition whose time has past, continued by the historical inertia of popular Evangelicalism, but without a credible intellectual distinctiveness ? This is a question that neither Quebedeaux, nor the New Evangelical historian dare to ask.

In 1980, there appeared a book that would change forever the way Evangelical historians would view their own history; that book was George Marsden's *Fundamentalism and the American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism*, published by the prestigious Oxford University Press. Marsden, a Professor of History at Duke University, has emerged among the ranks of Evangelical historians as the most thorough researcher and most skilled writer of his field. For the first time, in Marsden's work, an Evangelical historian has taken seriously the cultural influences that shaped the history of Evangelicalism. However, what is very strange about Marsden is that he still believes, in spite of the cultural influences, that it is quite possible for a historian to discern spiritual forces in the historical processes. In an

Afterword at the back of *Fundamentalism and the American Culture*, Marsden states:

The history of Christianity reveals a perplexing mixture of divine and human factors. As Richard Lovelace has said, this history, when viewed without a proper awareness of the spiritual forces involved "is as confusing as a football game in which half the players are invisible". The present work, an analysis of cultural influences on religious belief, is a study of things visible. As such it must necessarily reflect more than a little sympathy with the modern mode of explanation in terms of national causation. Yet it would be a mistake to assume that such sympathy is incompatible with, or even antagonistic to, a view of history in which God as revealed in Scripture is the dominant force, and in which other unseen spiritual forces are contending. I find that a Christian view of history is clarified if one considers reality as more or less like the world portrayed in the works of J.R.R. Tolkien. We live in the midst of contests between great and mysterious spiritual forces, which we understand only imperfectly and whose true dimensions we only occasionally glimpse. Yet, frail as we are, we do play a role in this history, on side either of the power of light or of the powers of darkness. It is crucially important then, that by God's grace, we keep our wits about us and discern the vast difference between the real forces for good and the powers of darkness disguised as angels of light

It seems that Marsden's statement sums up what the Evangelical historian is all about. He/She plays the game of modern scholarship while believing all along in a different type of scholarship, a medieval scholarship with devils and angels entering to human affairs. It is not without some relevance that Leonard Sweet announces the arrival of "The New Evangelical Historiography" to "a front-rank position within scholarship on American religious history" by comparing this phenomena in American religious

scholarship to the animal trials of the medieval period.²⁹ Sweet, himself an Evangelical historian, seems to be suggesting that the Evangelical historiography was able to identify the spiritual forces within the social order in the same manner that premoderns believed they could determine the mind and motives of animals through the legal profession.

Marsden's *Fundamentalism and the American Culture* dates the true beginning of what is now being labelled "The New Evangelical Historiography".³⁰ Smith may have been the first "Evangelical" to have written an academic history, but his profile in the American Evangelical network was weak. Smith had chosen to publish *Revivalism and Social Reform* through the broad Methodist-based publishers, Abingdon Press, and Harper & Row. Thus his work was never celebrated as a distinctly Evangelical scholarship until after the coming of Marsden. Marsden, on the other hand, was closer to the centre of the American Evangelical network. Smith was acquainted with Evangelicalism through his Methodist heritage, and there is no indication that he belonged to the interdenominational Neo-Evangelical movement. Marsden was, however, linked into a school of historians whose allegiances were with the educational centres of Neo-Evangelicalism, such as Joel Carpenter, Mark Noll, Harry Stout, Grant Wacker, Donald Dayton, and Richard Mouw.³¹ Marsden himself was professor of history at Calvin College, and visiting professor of church history at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

²⁹Leonard Sweet. "Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves: The New Evangelical Historiography". *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. Vol. 56. 1988. p. 397.

³⁰Leonard Sweet, Professor of Church History at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio, used the label in his 1988 article in *Journal of American Academy of Religion*. Leonard Sweet. "Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves".

³¹Marsden makes acknowledgments to these scholars in Marsden. *Fundamentalism and the American Culture*. p. ix.

It was this sense of an established school of historians that created the New Evangelical Historiography, and not merely individual Evangelicals working in the profession of academic history. In 1980, when Marsden broke through into the mainstream life of academic history, this school of historians began to make their presence felt within the American historical profession. The two leading historians of this school is George Marsden and Mark Noll.³² If Marsden was the one who broke through, Noll lead the other Evangelical historians in consolidating Marsden's achievements. Whereas Marsden presented a dispassionate observation of Evangelicalism in his historical writings (with the exception of his more metaphysical statements, as shown above), Noll expresses a history of Evangelicalism that is far more passionately embraced. This sense of detachment-attachment is indicative of the dual role of the Evangelical historian, as Sweet states, " Noll is also willing to write articles that reach far into popular evangelical culture. Even in his popular writings, Marsden represents the quintessential evangelical historian's historian".³³ Noll's *Between Faith and Criticism* (1986), considered to be his *magnum opus* to date, is directed more to a popular Evangelical audience (in spite of its broad religious publisher, Harper & Row) since it is merely an apology which set out to demonstrate that Evangelical scholarship is now acceptable in academia (in spite of the fact that many Neo-Evangelical scholars still assume biblical inerrancy). Marsden's *magnum opus* to date, *Reforming Fundamentalism*, is a far more rigorous work since it raises some difficult questions about academic credibility in the foundation of the same Evangelical scholarship that Noll claims has intellectually "arrived". These questions will be examine later, but here, it is enough to see the variation in scholarship among

³²Sweet states "Noll is the most prolific author of books, essays, and reviews among evangelical historians. Marsden is the closest thing one can imagine to a pontiff of evangelical history". Sweet. *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves*. p. 398.

³³Sweet. *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves*. p. 400.

Evangelical historians, with some tending toward the popular writings of their dual role, while others toward more rigorous enterprises.

Noll and Marsden are, therefore, the two archetypes in the New Evangelical historiography. The historical writing of all those involved in the Evangelical school of history seems to either move in the direction of Marsden, to be dispassionate about Evangelicalism, or in the direction of Noll, to passionately embrace Evangelicalism. The Evangelical historians are faced with, what Douglas Sweeney calls, "the Observer-Participant Dilemma".³⁴ It is the dilemma of those who write a history where the historian as an observer is also a participant. The phenomenon of "observer-participant history" can be seen in Marxist historians writing the history of Marxism, Liberal-democrat historians writing the history of modern democracy, Roman Catholic historians writing the history of Catholicism, American historians writing a history of global Americanisation, and to the point, Evangelical historians writing the history of Evangelicalism.³⁵ It is a problem that will be address further on, but it is sufficient at this point to recognise that the American Evangelical historians, as lead by Marsden and Noll, understood that they were engaged in observer-participant history.³⁶ There are three keys that Sweet articulates as important to an understanding of the phenomenon of the observer-participant history in the New Evangelical historiography. Firstly, there is the fact that the New Evangelical historians were the first generation of Neo-Evangelical parents who themselves were second generation fundamentalists, thus they were removed from the roots of contemporary Evangelicalism enough to be critically reflective. Secondly, the New Evangelical

³⁴Sweeney. *The Essential Evangelicalism Dialectic*.

³⁵Patrick O' Farrell has raised this issue in the context of Catholic historiography. Patrick O' Farrell. "Historians and Religious Convictions". *Historical Studies*. Vol. 17. No. 68. April 1977. O' Farrell's contribution to the argument will be discussed further on.

³⁶Sweet. *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves*. p. 398.

historians were the children of the 1960s, alienated by the national-religious mythologies which were largely fostered by the Evangelical tradition, thus Sweet states "Evangelical historiography on Evangelicalism is thus a form of what Germans call *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* - coming to terms with and overcoming the past by recognising oneself as a product of the past and mastering the history of one's own past". Thirdly, the New Evangelical historians believe that in their historical quest they can find hidden spiritual meaning, thus Marsden's declaration that the "real forces for good and powers of darkness disguised as angels of light" can be identified.³⁷

It was Leonard Sweet's 1988 article on "The New Evangelical Historiography" that first indicated a major division among the new up-and-coming Evangelical historians.³⁸ The major problem that Sweet identifies in the New Evangelical historiography is that it has been dominated by those historians (principally Marsden and Noll) whose roots are in the Reformed tradition, thus, leaving a full historical treatment of the Wesleyan, or Holiness, side of Evangelicalism rather bare.³⁹ Although Timothy Smith had forged the academic ground for Evangelical historians from the Holiness perspective, such historians have been overshadowed by others in their field. Simply, they have not produced a major text since Smith's 1957 work.⁴⁰ There are Evangelical historians from the Holiness tradition that have, since the late 1980s, started to make their mark. These would include Paul Merritt Bassett,

³⁷Sweet. *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves*. pp. 401-404.

³⁸Sweet. *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves*.

³⁹Sweet. *Wise as Serpents, Innocent as Doves*. p. 400.

⁴⁰The closest to a major text from Evangelical historians in the Holiness tradition, in recent years, are Donald Dayton. *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism*. Scarecrow Press and Francis Asbury Press. 1987; Richard Hughes. *Illusions of Innocence: Protestant Primitivism in America 1630-1875*. University of Chicago Press. 1988; Richard Hughes (ed). *The American Quest for the Primitive Church*. University of Illinois Press. 1988; Timothy Weber. *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming*. American Premillennialism. 1875-1982. University of Chicago Press. 1987.

Professor of the History of Christianity at Nazarene Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Missouri; Donald Dayton, Professor of Theology and Ethics at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lombard, Illinois; Richard T. Hughes, Professor of Religion at Pepperdine University, Malibu, California; Leonard Sweet, Professor of Church History at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio; Timothy P. Weber, Professor of Church History at Denver Seminary, Denver, Colorado; and the recent work of Timothy Smith at John Hopkins University.⁴¹

In a paper presented to the American Theological Society, Donald Dayton gives one of the best insights to the particular perspective of an Evangelical historian from the Holiness tradition.⁴² Dayton presents to his audience a brief historical survey of the movements that has come to make up the Holiness, or Wesleyan, wing of American Evangelicalism (ie. Wesleyan doctrine in revivalism, Holiness movement, Keswick movement, the Pentecostal movement, the Charismatic movement) before declaring this subject matter to be a "people's history", as opposed to the "the histories of `academic theologies' that generally presented by liberal Protestant historians and Evangelical historians from the Reformed tradition."⁴³ In one sense, Dayton has made a valid point. Too often religious historians and theologians come from a "History From Above" approach and totally miss what is happening in the "History From Below". It is not uncommon to see academic historians and theologians discussing enlightened Protestant preachers who expounded from the pulpit, totally ignorant that, while "liberal" preachers expound, many conservatives in the pew, silently (or not so silently), would deliberately undermine (behind the preachers' back)

⁴¹Sweeney. *The Essential Evangelicalism Dialectic*. p. 73; List of Contributors in Dayton and Johnston (ed). *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*. pp. 273-277.

⁴²Dayton. *Yet Another Layer of the Onion*.

⁴³*Ibid.* p. 94.

everything that was expound.⁴⁴ A "History From Below" approach reveals an insidious Evangelical network (ie. bible colleges, and publishing houses) designed to destroying the influence of academic theologies through an indoctrinating process of the grassroots, which takes place largely beyond the view of liberal Protestant seminaries and secular university.⁴⁵ An Evangelical distinctiveness (ie. to see itself as the only true representative of pure Christianity and suspect the spirituality of Non-Evangelical religions) will always be on about subverting the rest of Protestantism, and even Catholicism (witness the influence of the Charismatic movement in certain sections of the Catholic Church).

In another sense, Dayton possibly will err if he makes the distinction between "the people" and "the views from above" too rigid. Wesley's notion of perfection (sanctification) may not have been the cutting edge of academic theology, but it nevertheless was a intellectual concept that filtered down to the masses. "The People" themselves did not just come up with this concept, they were taught it. Even the most religious anti-intellectualism has some intellectual reference. In fact, religious anti-intellectualism in American fundamentalism was a result of holding on to elements

⁴⁴The writer is here thinking of situations that can be commonly perceived in mainstream Protestant denominations composed of both liberal and Evangelical believers, often sitting in the same pews of the same churches. In Australia, the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) is a good example. Such denominations are arenas of unspoken (officially) internal conflict. A particular good illustration of this could be seen in the Queensland Synod of the UCA when an Evangelical principal of the denominational Bible college moved his field of operation in a direction that was contrary to the theological direction of the denominational theological centre. This Evangelical principal would guide his graduates into the theological centre, teaching them to ignore the conclusions of academic theologies. It became a game where Evangelical-indoctrinated graduates from the bible college pretend, at the theological centre, to be engaged in the scholarship in order to gain the qualification. Once released into parish work, these graduates quickly drop an pretence of scholarship, and continued to openly indoctrinate their parishioners in the current trends of Evangelical ideology. The teaching staff of the theological centre were made to look like fools, as the ethos of their own denominational Evangelical bible college undermined everything they stood for.

⁴⁵An Australian example of a Catholic parallel to the subversive influences that undercut "the views from above" would be B.A. Santamaria's Movement.

of out-dated intellectual paradigms (ie. Medieval supernaturalism, Reformational biblicalism, Puritan moralism, Frontier revivalism) against the new, more enlighten, intellectual paradigms (ie. biblical criticism, evolutionary science, Freudian or Jungian psychology). Therefore, it is not that the religious grassroots generate a separate intellectual world from the world of the religious thinker, but that the grassroots lags behind the cutting-edge of religious thought, still captive to intellectual references that have become obsolete. The problem is that, historically, scholarship in Evangelicalism (which itself suffers from historical inertia) is designed to stop current academic theologies from penetrating down to their conservative constituency. Evidence of this is clearly seen in popular Evangelical apologetical texts, a good example being Josh McDowell's *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (1972) and *More Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (1975).⁴⁶

One of the concerns that arises if Dayton makes a distinction between "the people" and "the views from above" that is too rigid, is that it will legitimise a fundamentalist myth which sees grassroots believers as the ones who preserve an unchanging Christian spirituality against the distorters of faith who stand above on the denominational hierarchy. Both the liberal Protestant "History From Above" approach and Dayton's "History From Below" approach fails to address the alienating gap between the grassroots and academic theologies. It is a gap which the true believers of Evangelicalism, and the liberal Protestants fail to comprehend, but one that alienated former Evangelicals understand too well. It is a gap in which thousands (worldwide), simply, either walk away from their Christian faith or leave the organised Church (maintaining their own sense of Christian spirituality) in disgust. This is an important

⁴⁶Josh McDowell. *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*. Historical Evidences for the Christian Scriptures. San Bernardino. Here's Life Publishers. Rev. Ed. 1981. (1972); John McDowell. *More Evidence That Demands a Verdict*. San Bernardino. Here's Life Publishers. 1975.

area for the religious historians to examine, but one in which only a few do.⁴⁷

While the historians from the Reformed tradition, at least, acknowledge the gap where the grassroots lagged behind the progressiveness of the religious intelligentsia, even though they would still be resistant to further academic progressiveness, the historians from the Holiness tradition will not acknowledge such progressiveness. Instead, they reverse the order. According to Donald Dayton and Daniel Walker Howe, the religious grassroots in the form of the Wesleyan-Holiness side of Evangelicalism was not lagging behind, but was, in fact, the progressive force in American religion. Dayton, building from the analysis of Smith's *Revivalism and Social Reform*, points to the fact that the progressivism of the Social Gospel movement was due to the influence of the Holiness movement upon Walter Rauschenbusch; that the abolitionist movement of the Wesleyans was more progressive than the "Christian Realist" of the era; that the Holiness movement was the centre for the early feminist movement (ie, women's suffrage, and women's ministry).⁴⁸ Dayton's portrayal of American revivalism is one that minimise the moralism and authoritarianism while highlighting its positive contributions. Dayton, in fact, seeks to distance the revivalist-holiness wing from the stigma of fundamentalism by defining fundamentalism as the "Presbyterianization of evangelicalism".⁴⁹ Howe goes much further, and states that revivalism "Far from being reactionary...was an engine driving rational change, a force for modernization".⁵⁰ Such interpretations have to be seriously

⁴⁷For examples, consult the category of "Stories of Theological Alienation" as it appears in, Neville Buch. *Evangelical Historiography, A Broader Religious Historiography, And Stories of Theological Alienation, in the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand: A Bibliography*. St. Lucia. Department of History, University of Queensland. First Edition. 1993.

⁴⁸Dayton. *Yet Another Layer of the Onion*. pp. 103-108.

⁴⁹Dayton. *Yet Another Layer of the Onion*. pp. 100-102.

⁵⁰Daniel Walker Howe. "The Evangelical Movement and Political Culture in North During the Second

questioned. It is not that Dayton and Howe are not correct to point out positive contributions that flowed out of revivalism and the Holiness movement, but that they have overemphasised the positive characteristics of the phenomena. Dayton is right when he sees the Wesleyans as forward-thinking in their opposition to human slavery. However, the Wesleyan tradition (including Finney's Oberlin College) was not the only vehicle of the abolitionist movement (what about the Unitarian, Transcendental and Quaker traditions ?), and one must question its motivation - abolition for the purpose of conversion or out of a belief in political freedom ?⁵¹ Dayton, also, is very strangely silent on the place of the Southern Methodists.⁵² Does Dayton place them conveniently outside the Wesleyan-Holiness side of Evangelicalism ? As for the Social Gospel movement, it may have influences from the Holiness tradition, but the concept of a "social gospel" was always rejected by Holiness preachers who were mentally imprisoned by their Americanised individualism. It is true that the Holiness tradition has shown a great progressiveness on the issue of gender equality *than* the Catholic and high-Churched traditionalists. However, feminism is much more than women being able to preach and vote, and there is little evidence to suggest that Holiness churches

Party System". *Journal of American History*. Vol. 77. No. 4. March 1991. p. 1239. As one who has experienced the anti-intellectualism, moralism, and authoritarianism of Americanised revivalism, one is tempted to roll around on the floor in hysterical laughter at Howe's comment that such revivalism was a driving force for rational change and "a force of modernization".

⁵¹ For a wider picture of the abolitionist movement than one limited to the contribution of the Evangelicals, see Louis Filler. *The Crusade Against Slavery*. 1830-1860. New York. Harper & Row. 1960. Interestingly, Filler notes that abolitionist "deserted old-time churches for Transcendentalism, spiritualism, atheism, and other isms". Filler. *The Crusade Against Slavery*. p. 116.

⁵² Leland J. Bellot has demonstrated that many historians have been wrong in establishing "the historically untenable corollary that Evangelical principles and British pro-slavery sentiment were incompatible" (p. 19). Bellot argument that shows that groups of Evangelicals were pro-slavery could apply equally to the American context. Leland J. Bellot. "Evangelicals and the Defence of Slavery in Britain's Old Colonial Empire". *Journal of Southern History*. Vol. 37. No. 1. February 1971. pp 19-40; For an example in the American context see Drew Faust. "Evangelicalism and the Meaning of the Proslavery Argument: The Reverend Thornton Stringfellow". *The Virginia Magazine of History & Biography*. Vol. 85. No. 1. January 1977.

were any less patriarchal than the rest of the society.⁵³ Again, as with abolitionism, feminism does not belong solely to the Holiness tradition. One has to also consider the feminism evident among the Fabian Socialists in England, and among the Marxists in continental Europe. It is a lesson that no movement, no ideology, can claim to be "a force for modernisation" in any unique way. All movements will have their problems, and all ideologies have been counterproductive at some stage in history. In the case of Dayton's vision of a progressive revivalism, he may want to blame the Reformed wing for the problems of fundamentalism, but the truth is that the revivalist-holiness wing was equally culpable. The Reformed wing may have provided the Princeton Theology (the theology of fundamentalism), but it was Moody Bible Institute, the centre of the revivalist-holiness wing, that provided *The Fundamentals* (the manifesto of fundamentalism).

Variations among Evangelical historians among the Reformed, Holiness, and Evangelistic traditions have been considered. In passing, it should be mentioned that there is a small representation of Evangelical historians from the Mennonite tradition emerging in the New Evangelical Historiography. The Mennonite tradition has only recently been considered as part of Evangelicalism. Its radical pacifism put Mennonite Christianity outside an Evangelical system that has constantly emphasis a militarist view of life (ie. life as a continual fight against evil which was, in wartime,

⁵³Olive Anderson reaches this conclusion when she argues that the early stage of women preachers in mid-Victorian Britain "did not explicitly challenge either the social convention that respectable woman played no public role in mixed society or Christian teaching that women should be silent in the church" (p. 469). Anderson goes on to show that the phenomenon of women preachers was based on feminine spirituality that appealed to "mid- Victorian ideals of feminine sweetness and tenderness" (p. 472), deliberate sensationalism (as a novel attraction), extrovert emotionalism of revivalism (that women's social-shaped emotions exemplified), pre-millennial expectations (Joel 2 v 28-29 "your daughters shall prophesy"), and was totally irrelevant to the secular women's movement. Anderson concludes that such religious feminism disregard the issue of gender, and that women preachers, such as Catherine Booth, firmly believed in the subordination of women. Olive Anderson. "Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain: Some Reflections on Feminism, Popular Religion and Social Change". *Historical Journal*. Vol. 12. No. 3. 1969. pp. 467-484.

taken as a literal fight to the death).⁵⁴ However, the anti-Vietnam war and general anti-establishment sensibilities among the Young Evangelicals meant that contemporary Evangelicalism could begin to be open to other conservative religious traditions that were politically and socially radical. Thus Mennonites came to be included within the framework of Evangelicalism. One of the leading Young Evangelical scholars whose inclusion on the Evangelical scene caused a major tension between the Evangelical left and the Evangelical hard right (ie. The New Christian Right) was the Mennonite Ronald Sider. As an Evangelical economist, his leftwing political views on global wealth redistribution alienated the conservative Neo-Evangelicals much more than their distaste for the Mennonite's pacifism. Sider's entry into the Evangelical publishing world with *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (1977) signalled the end of the illusion of United Evangelical front, as condemnation rose from the Evangelical hard right (lead by the Neo-Calvinist economist, Gary North), and doubts being expressed from the Evangelical centre-right (what Quebedeaux calls "Establishment Evangelicalism").⁵⁵ Other contributions to the Evangelical scholarship, from the Mennonite tradition, comes from John H. Yoder, and C. Norman Kraus. Yoder, a New Testament scholar, challenged the dominate political conservatism in Evangelical American with his major text, *The Politics of Jesus* (1972).⁵⁶ Kraus, Professor emeritus of Religion at Goshen College, Goshen, Indiana,

⁵⁴This does not mean that Evangelicalism-Fundamentalism and pacifism are mutually exclusive. One may easily find examples of fundamentalists who were also pacifist, eg. William Jennings Bryan until the outbreak of the World War I. However, this was not the dominant character of American Fundamentalists, such as Billy Sunday, a leading militarist during World War I; and not the dominant character of Neo-Evangelicals, such as Billy Graham, a pro-Cold War Warrior; Examples can also be found in Drew Faust. "Christian Soldiers: The Meaning of Revivalism in the Confederate Army". *Journal of Southern History*. Vol. 53. No. 1. February 1987. and in Olive Anderson. "The Growth of Christian Militarism in Mid-Victorian Britain". *English Historical Review*. Vol 86. No. 1. 1971.

⁵⁵Ronald Sider. *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*. A Biblical Study. Inter-Varsity Press. Rev. Ed. 1984 (1977).

⁵⁶John H. Yoder. *The Politics of Jesus*. 1972.

is one Mennonite scholar who has contributed specifically to Evangelical Historiography with a text, *Dispensationalism in America: Its Rise and Development*, which was published around the same time as Timothy Smith's major work.⁵⁷

Mention should be also briefly made of a small representation of Evangelical historians from the Seventh-Day Adventist tradition in the New Evangelical Historiography. This is an incredible development considering that Seventh-Day Adventism had been branded by Evangelicalism as a "sect", with the same meaning that most people would use in regard of a group like the Jehovah Witness. The turnabout has occurred because Seventh-Day Adventism, in recent years, has undergone a period of theological liberalisation, and thus, has largely repudiated its former sectarianism. This has enabled the more ecumenical wing of Evangelicalism to include Seventh-Day Adventist scholars in some of its historiographical enterprises.⁵⁸ It is difficult to identify a Seventh-Day Adventist scholar who is a "practising" (in terms of a profession) historian, but Russell L. Staples, Professor of World Mission at Seventh-Day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, contributed to Dayton's (with Robert K. Johnston) edited text, *The Variety of American Evangelicalism* (1991).⁵⁹

The inclusion of such diverse traditions, as the Reformed, Holiness, Evangelistic, Mennonite, Adventist, as well as shifts towards the liberal Protestant

⁵⁷C. Norman Kraus. *Dispensationalism in America. Its Rise and Development*. John Knox Press. 1958.

⁵⁸An Australian example of a Seventh-Day scholar included in Evangelical historiography is Arthur Patrick. "An Adventist and an Evangelical in Australia ? The Case of Ellen White in the 1980s". *Lucas*. No. 12. December 1991.

⁵⁹Dayton and Johnston (ed). *The Variety of American Evangelicalism*. 1991.

traditions (although denied) while still entertaining theological fundamentalism, presents us with the real nature of Evangelicalism. It is, in the final analysis, much like the Roman Catholic system which maintains the inclusion of diverse, often opposing, orders (such as the Jansenist and Jesuit orders) so as to maintain its hegemony. For the ultimate irony, is that the inclusiveness of such diversity serves only to strength the central authority of the system. For Evangelicalism can no longer be seen in terms of a definitive intellectual identity, ie. its doctrinal distinctiveness. Instead, Evangelicalism can be increasingly defined distinctly by its subtle ideological agendas (ie. to see itself as the only true representative of pure Christianity and suspect the spirituality of Non-Evangelical religions) which is largely controlled by the large Evangelical organisational network. This Evangelical organisational network is hierarchical (with the American NAE, centred largely in Los Angeles, Chicago and Boston areas, on top, nationally, and in terms of global influence), powerful, and dangerous (witness the NAE's political influence in the Eisenhower, Nixon, Carter, and Reagan administrations). In the 1970s, the power of this Evangelical network was at such a height that the American secular media dubbed the 1970s "the Decade of the Evangelical" (it was the decade of Charles Colson conversion to the Evangelical camp in the midst of the Watergate affair, the Evangelical Mark Hatfield as Senator for Oregon, Governor Reagan's support for the Creationist movement in California, the rise of Evangelical Pro-Life movement, the Charismatic movement, the Jesus movement, the popularity of Hal Lindsay's type premillennialism, the early beginnings of the Church Growth movement, the televangelist ministries of Pat Robertson, Jim Bakker, and Jimmy Swaggart beginning to takeoff, and the Evangelical Jimmy Carter as the President of the United States of America). Outside the United States, the movements that were produced and packaged by the American Evangelical network found its way into the global Evangelical sub-culture. In Australia, the Evangelical sub-culture has been so deeply Americanised by its familiarity with the American

Evangelical network that intellectual questions about the relationship between religion and culture was lost in Evangelical church life, where it scrambled for the latest Americanised Evangelical fad (including the Californian-styled Creationist movement, Neo-Pentecostalism, the Charismatic movement, the Jesus movement, Hal Lindsay's type premillennialism, and the Church Growth movement). The problem for the Evangelical historian is that, while he/she maybe committed to the search for historical truth, he/she is part of ideological system that demands hegemony (note the use of declarations of faith for their historical associations), and, given the right historical moment, would be no less insidious than what has been seen in the practise of Marxist-Leninism.⁶⁰

⁶⁰This could have been the case, during the 1980s, if the Evangelical centre-right had been able to successful challenged the American Christian Reconstructionist movement (made up of a number of extreme Right-wing Neo-Calvinist thinktanks that gave the New Christian Right its intellectual base). In a society like the United States, it is not unthinkable, given the historical movement, an Evangelical dictatorship could take over. This is the scenario portrayed in the film *The Handmaid's Tale*. Outside the United States, one needs to consider the Evangelical forces that caused political and social hardship during the Joh Bjelke-Petersen era in Queensland, and the Fred Nile-Sydney Anglican diocese combination in New South Wales.

Appendix 1

Notes: "The Religious Historiography and its Essential Contribution to Evangelical Historiography"

Since Evangelical historiography forms a sub-species in religious history, and there is some question about the relationship between Evangelical historiography and religious history, something needs to be said about the evolution of religious historiography in the last sixty years.

Up until the 1930s, religious historiography existed in what is known as "Church History", the examination of historical processes in terms of the dogmas expressed in Church life. The great Church historians of the nineteenth century were the American German-Reformed Philip Schaff (1819-1893), and the American Congregationalist Williston Walker (1860-1922). Since the 1930s, there is a major shift in religious historiography when theologians and historians began to ask the question of what is the Christian understanding of history. In 1929, the Catholic Christopher Dawson, Professor of History at Harvard, challenges Oswald Spengler's view of inevitable historical decline by producing his noted response to Spengler, *Progress and Religion: An Historical Enquiry*. Dawson concluded, in this treatise, that what was needed was a recovery of a Christian view of history. What was to follow, during the twenty year period from 1929 to 1949, was a number of major works on such a view of history. The Quaker H.G. Wood, in 1933-34, presented the Hulsean Lectures at Cambridge entitled *Christianity and the Nature of History*. The 1937 Oxford Conference on Church, Community and State was devoted to the subject of history, the proceeding published under the title of *The Kingdom of God and History* (1938). Three of its contributors were Dawson, Wood, and the German Lutheran theologian, Paul Tillich. In 1939, three major works are produced; Nicholas Berdyaev, a Russian Orthodox, had his *The Meaning Of History* published in English, Tillich wrote *The Interpretation of History*, and the American Catholic Historical Association produced *The Catholic Philosophy of History*.

In this year, the American theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971), presented the Gifford Lectures on history at Edinburgh, an event that marked a high point in the early development in this study of the Christian view of history. For it is Niebuhr who becomes the most influential figure on the question of the nature and meaning of history, from a Christian perspective, during the 1940s. Niebuhr's publishes his major work on this question in 1949, entitled *Faith and History: A Comparison of Christian and Modern Views of History*.⁶¹ This work was one of the last in the search for a Christian view of history. In same year of Niebuhr's publication (1949), the English historian, Herbert Butterfield produces his classic work, *Christianity and History* and the American historian Kenneth Scott Latourette's (1884-1968) produced

⁶¹ Reinhold Niebuhr. *Faith and History: A Comparison of Christian and Modern Views of History*. London. Nisbet and Co. 1949.

his noted article entitled "The Christian Understanding of History" that appeared in *The American Historical Review*. Butterfield brought this search for a Christian understanding to its logical conclusion. Butterfield affirmed a view of Providence in History, but was wary of being able to identify how this providence worked. Latourette too, was wary - "He [the historian] cannot conclusively demonstrate the validity of the Christian understanding of history" and "The historian is dealing with visible events, but there are also invisible forces which he cannot measure".⁶² Butterfield found himself caught between those secularists who believed that everything in history could be explain without reference to the divine, and those like Lord Action who identified divine providence in the whole notion of historical progress.⁶³ The continuation of a specifically Christian historiography was in danger of either the same fallacy of the nineteenth century Whig historians - merely replacing the Whig notion of progress with the Christian notion of Providence - or end up irrelevant as secular historians continue to explain history without reference to the divine. With Butterfield and Latourette, there is a clear distinction between the philosophy of history that the Christian may understand, and the way in which a Christian historian may write history. Such a historian may philosophically believe in God's Providence, but he/she has no illusion that a credible academic history could be articulated from such a perspective.

This development in religious historiography was, in the main, a theologically-driven phenomenon. It was a period when the theologian paid a visit to the historian, and when the historians challenged them, they retreated back into speculative theology. It can be compared to the recent phenomenon of the theologian paying a visit to the scientist, in what is called "Process Theology". At the heart of this theology-history encounter, was the two historical problem that has plagued Christianity since the Enlightenment. The first was the problem of the search for the historical Jesus, an attempt to uncover what can be historically know about Jesus of Nazareth. The attempt concluded in the early twentieth century with Albert Schweiter's *Quest for the Historical Jesus*. Schweiter stated that the quest had ultimately failed. Few would dare to pick up the quest after Schweiter. Barbara Theiring, in recent years, has been one theologian-come-historian who thinks she may yet have found Schweiter's "holy grail". Most theologians and historians, however, are doubtful.

The second historical problem follows from the first; if we can not historically know Jesus of Nazareth, what can we historically know about the resurrection of Christ. It is this supposedly historical event that is the centre of Christian doctrine. If Christ is not resurrected, woe unto me, says Paul. Not so !, says the German theologian, Rudolf Bultmann. Bultmann in his work, *The Presence of*

⁶² Kenneth Scott Latourette. "The Christian Understanding of History". *American Historical Review*. Vol. 54. No. 2. January 1949. p. 276, 270.

⁶³ Herbert Butterfield. *Christianity and History*. London. Collins Fontana. 1949. pp. 97, 107.

Eternity, over comes the problem by minimising the importance of history to Christian faith and affirming the difference between the Jesus of history and the Christ of Faith. In doing so, he is following in Barth's existential approach to theology. Where Bultmann departs from Barth is that Bultmann believes it is only possible to recover the Christian Kerygma by de-mythologising the historical records of the New and Old Testaments. However, Wolfhart Pannenberg, yet another German theologian, disagrees with Bultmann. In his *Revelation as History*, Pannenberg states that the Christian Kerygma is meaningless if separated from history as we know it. For Pannenberg, the resurrection of Christ can be affirmed as a real event, beyond history - for it was beyond the perceptions of time and space, and not merely myth.

So while German theologians debate between de-mythologization and real events that are beyond history, interrupted only for another German historical problem ie. The Third Reich, most historians engaged in religious history avoid theologising their history, and proceeded with the task of establishing a well-rounded body of scholarship using a broad range of historiographical tools. Religious historiography becomes less orientated to "Church history", away from writing history as a way from expressing Church dogma. It seeks to become an academic discipline in its own right. In a way, religious historiography became diversified into a institutional-biographical approach to history, a social-cultural approach to history, and a history of Christian thought - which was a type of intellectual history.

In this dynamic period 1929-1949, there is no self-conscious Evangelical historiography. Latourette, the "Evangelical" historian, talks of "the Christian" understanding of history, not of an Evangelical understanding. Apart from Latourette, there was little that one called an "Evangelical historiography" at this point in time. The reason for this is that Evangelical Protestantism has largely been captured to the anti-intellectual tenets of an American-dominated fundamentalism. The great American intellectual centres of Evangelical Protestantism that existed in the nineteenth century, in particular, the Old Princeton School, were lost, during the first half of the twentieth century, to either the theological liberalism from above or the separatistic fundamentalism from below. The American Evangelical historian, George Marsden, argues that the second half of the twentieth century sees the American Evangelical establishment seeking to once again regain the intellectual respectability that they once enjoyed in the previous century. Thus American Evangelicalism, from the 1940s, began to establish new centre of learning that would make Evangelical thought have intellectual resonance in academia. Evangelical historiography has to be understood in this context. No only is Evangelical historiography a sub-species of religious history, it is a product of the attempt within American Evangelicalism to rid itself of its recent anti-intellectual separatist past, and rejoin the wider intellectual community. Evangelicalism in the United Kingdom, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand, has been largely dominated by this American Evangelical agenda.

So Evangelical historiography has been largely depended upon the work

of non-Evangelical religious scholarship of the 1929-1949 period to help it beginning to find its intellectual foundation. Apart from Latourette (and this case did not offer a self-conscious Evangelical framework), Evangelical scholarship has simply borrowed from outside its own Evangelical distinctiveness. Thus it can be said that Evangelical historiography holds on to its Evangelical distinctiveness in spite of itself. Take away all non-Evangelical religious historiographical support, and Evangelical historiography would be lost.

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