

Wesleyan Theology in Europe

Christian Thought in European Wesleyan tradition

Jørgen Thaarup



Prepared under the direction of
The European Methodist Council

Forlaget Tro-fast

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Preface

Even though the Wesleyan movement did not become a worldwide phenomenon before it took root on the American continent, it is a branch of Christianity that originated in Europe. First, of course, it took shape as an awakening within the Church of England in the 18th century, and then again in the 19th century when British missionaries spread the religion of the warmed heart on the continent. But above all emigrants to the United States brought it back to continental Europe in the form of various ecclesial branches. Institutions for theological training in the Wesleyan tradition started to operate in Europe in the middle of the 19th century and are active in training ministers and generating ever new forms of Wesleyan and Methodist theology to this day, from Russia in the East to Northern Ireland in the West, from Norway in the North to Italy in the South. These institutions – most of them are organized today in the network of Methodist-related Theological Schools in Europe (MTSE) – have been instrumental not only for keeping the Wesleyan theological heritage alive but also for producing new forms of Wesleyan and Methodist theologies in ever changing political, cultural, and religious landscapes.

Despite a history of 200 years of theological development in the Wesleyan and Methodist tradition in Europe, to this day no compact overview has been produced of this rich and multi-lingual branch of Christian theology. It is the merit of Jørgen Thaarup to have initiated this daunting task with this text, and he has done more than produced an “overview of European work in the field of Wesleyan theology” as was the task given by the European Methodist Council when it met for considerations in 2019. Building

on Thomas A. Langford's seminal book on theology in the Wesleyan tradition from 1983, Thaarup expands Langford's brief sketch of Wesleyan theology on the European continent to include the theological production outside of the British Isles, not least in Scandinavia and German speaking Europe. In addition to just listing published works in the Wesleyan and Methodist tradition, he has given some historical background of the history of Methodism in Europe and he has started to collect some biographical and academic background information about the authors included.

Thaarup humbly calls this initial version of *Wesleyan Theology in Europe* "a first draft experiment to develop a common history of theology in Wesleyan Europe". Indeed, it is a good and useful start of such an experiment, and I hope it will continue to develop with the input and theological creativity of ever new theological voices of academics and practitioners alike. May it be an inspiration for continuous theological work in the tradition of *practical divinity*!

21. May, 2021

Michael Nausner

Researcher at the Church of Sweden's Unit for Research and Analysis in Uppsala, and affiliated professor at Stockholm School of Theology

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Methodist Conference Minutes

1766

Question: Why are we not more knowing?

Answer: Read the most useful books,
and that regularly and constantly.
Steadily spend all the morning in this employ,
or at least five hours in twenty-four.
Or return to your trade!

Wesley: I will give each of you,
as fast as you will read them,
books to the value of five pounds.
And I desire the Assistants
will take care that all large societies
provide the *Christian Library*
for the use of the preachers.¹

1746

Question: In what light should your Assistants
consider themselves?

Answer: As learners rather than teachers;
as young students at the university,
for whom therefore a method of study
is expedient in the highest degree.²

¹ Wesley *Works* Vol 10, p. 340:3-4, 14, 20-24

² *Ibid.*, p. 179:17-21

Wesleyan theology in Europe

Introduction

In 2019 the *European Methodist Council* – Methodist, Wesleyan, and Uniting Churches in Europe, decided to form a working group on Wesleyan theology in Europe. The first objective for the group was “to create an overview of European work in the field of Wesleyan theology; this includes: Research: Published works, doctoral thesis and books; Updated information regarding current Wesley scholars in Europe.”

In Europe, there are a number of churches and Christian leaders that are rooted in or associated with the evangelical movement as filtered through the lives and influence of John and Charles Wesley. The European Methodist Council consists of twelve Methodist, Wesleyan, and Uniting Churches. Each of these churches have developed their own history and their own specific identity in that history. We have several parallel histories of Wesleyanism and Methodism in Europe. Each of these churches also have their specific history of theology and doctrines. All twelve Churches are Wesleyan, but with different accentuations and focus within the Wesleyan theology.

The history of European Methodist theology includes the history of the studies of individual theologians. Individual theologians are also part of Methodist church history. The oral teaching and influences of individuals are difficult to ascertain and present. The individuals will be represented by their selected writings and academic publications.

The initiative of the *European Methodist Council* in creating a working group on Wesleyan theology was taken in order to bolster a common Wesleyan theological identity. Wesley’s original texts are, of course, common sources for all twelve churches. But the further development in separate yet parallel Methodist organizations and churches shows that the twelve member churches do not possess knowledge about and the ownership of their common Wesleyan theological heritage following John Wesley and up to modern time in the different traditions and churches in Europe.

One approach to building up a common theological identity is through the compilation of information about our theologians and their works. What has formed the theological development in the

churches up to the present time? This document is a first draft experiment to develop a common history of theology in Wesleyan Europe.

Thomas Langford's *Practical Divinity* (1983) constitutes the only attempt at building up a Methodist History of Theology. His perspective draws primarily from American Wesleyanism, and secondarily from Methodism with some global outlook, including European perspectives. We have used Langford's presentation and extracted some parts of his writings on History of Methodist Theology in Europe.³

Another approach in compiling a common theological identity is via the praxis of theology, where each of the European Methodist churches draws theological inspiration from other fellow Methodist traditions. Translations into European languages and use of text books from other continents in the pastoral training in Europe is a way of using theological resources from fellow Methodist traditions. When we find inspiration in other Methodist traditions, we create ownership to that specific expression of Methodist faith.

Liturgy, hymnals and order of sacraments and worships provide other ways of revealing a church's theological foundation. By understanding the praxis of liturgy and worship as a theological discipline, one can discern how Methodism from the beginning was influenced by the same heritage and tradition of doctrinal authority found in Anglican theology. Wesley used liturgy, hymnals and order of sacraments and worship to form the spiritual life and create new confessional identity. Wesley used the wording *Practical Divinity* to describe this character of theology. Sometimes he also named the ongoing and historical life of the church work for *Experimental Christianity*.⁴ Wesleyan and Methodist Churches in Europe have a lot of material to contribute to this history, both materials developed from the common Methodist heritage, and material coming from the protestant context of each of the European Methodist churches. That part of the history of *Practical Divinity* is not included in this presentation and work. It would be an additional project to write and collect the theology of European Wesleyanism and Methodism from the

³ Langford, 1983

⁴ Wesley *Christian Library* Vol 1, p. i, iv-v, Vol 2, p. 209-210

perspective of liturgy, hymnals and orders of sacraments and worship.

The United Methodist Church is in a situation of possibly splitting over the issue of human sexuality. In this situation some groups, particularly among American Methodism, use the wording “Wesleyan” and “Wesleyan positions” to profile themselves against other groups within Methodism. The same groups publish books with their specific understanding of Wesleyan theology. This European booklet is not presenting an argument dealing with that discussion, and our understanding of Wesleyan theology shall not be seen in the context of United Methodist Church groups’ discussions of what the term “Wesleyan” is and is not.

This document gives an overview of the first common history of Wesleyan theology in Europe, and an attempt to contextualize this history to modern time. Secondly, it presents a bibliography of resources focusing on academic work done in the field of Wesleyan theology in Europe. This bibliography is meant for students and scholars who need a compendium of resources for studies in Methodist Theology in Europe. Thirdly, it gives a list of European on-line resources for new research. Finally, the document contains an introduction to the *Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological studies*.

The members of the EMC working group on theology in Europe 2019-2021 are: Dr Meeli Tankler, Dr Geordan Hammond and Dr Jørgen Thaarup, convenor and writer.

The first draft of this report was addressed to the European Methodist Council and to each of the twelve Wesleyan and Methodist and Uniting Churches in Europe, member churches of the European Methodist Churches, and to the wider audience of theologians. After the presentation, all members of the council were invited to give responses and additional information to the report. Special thanks to David Field, Michael Nausner and Geordan Hammond, for input which has been implemented.

This booklet is still a draft report since the report still needs to incorporate information from several other areas with Wesleyan traditions in Europe. Hopefully readers of the booklet will respond in the future with information to fill what is missing in this history of Wesleyan theology; or you can read the booklet as a commented bibliography to Wesleyan thinking in Europe.

The sending out of this booklet is supported by the association of Methodist Theological Seminaries in Europe, MTSE, and by the UMC Northern Europe and Baltic area.

John Wesley's theology in European context

By Jørgen Thaarup

John Wesley (1703-91) and Charles Wesley (1707-88) were European theologians. Both were educated at Oxford University and served lifelong as ordained pastors in the Anglican Church. Apart from a short several years tenure in a ministerial appointment to the English colonies in America, as well as John Wesley's few months sabbatical of studies in Germany, they lived their academic and pastoral lives in the British Isles.⁵

John and Charles Wesley's theological training started in their home. Mother Susanna Wesley (1669-1742) was a daughter of dissenter pastor Dr Samuel Annesley (1620-1696), one of many theologians who had left the Anglican Church because of the Acts of Uniformity in 1662. From his mother Susanna, John Wesley was influenced with the thinking and sympathy of Puritanism, a substantial movement within British Church History both inside and outside the Church of England. The Puritan influences in Wesley's theology lasted during his lifetime.⁶

The Wesley family was a family of ordained theologians. John's and Charles' grandfather and great grandfather were ordained pastors of the Anglican Church, but had revolted against the Act of Uniformity in 1662 together with 2000 ordained pastors of the church. Father Samuel Wesley had returned to the Anglican Church and became one of its High Churchmen and an active member of the SPCK (*Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*). The professional life of Samuel Wesley was in parish ministry, but, as often practiced in the European established churches, he functioned as an academic theologian during his whole lifetime. After receiving his Master of Arts degree and his

⁵ Rack, 2002

⁶ Baker, 1970, p. 7-11, 237-8, 243-5

commencement as pastor in the parish of Epworth, he completed and defended two Doctoral Thesis, one at Oxford University, and one at Cambridge University.⁷ Samuel Wesley published several academic books of theology.

John and Charles had an elder brother, also named Samuel Wesley. First, he was a pastor appointed to parish ministry, but later he became rector of a university preparing boarding school in Bristol. The young John Wesley was influenced by brother Samuel and served in his parish for a short period. From Wesley's letters we find several letter correspondences with brother Samuel.⁸

John Wesley's spiritual formation was inspired by his readings of classic *Lectio Divina* texts. Among the most important is *De Imitatione Christi* from around 1450, by the Augustinian monk Thomas a Kempis (1379-1471). Other influences include: the Anglican theologian Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667) *Religion of Duty* and *The Rule and Exercise of Holy Living and of Holy Dying* from 1651, and the Anglican theologian and High Churchman William Law (1686-1761) *A Practical Treatise Upon Christian Perfection* from 1726, and *A serious call to a devout and holy life* from 1728. Included in Wesley's *Lectio Divina* readings we also find readings in the Greek Church Fathers, among them Macarios (d. 160) *Homilies* and Ephraem Syrus (306-373) *Exhortation*, two books Wesley studied intensively during the 18 months he served as Chaplain in Frederica, Georgia Colonies.⁹ Behind Wesley's famous booklet *The Character of a Methodist*, we find, according to Wesley's own notes, his reading of Clement of Alexandria (150-216) *Stromateis 7th book*.¹⁰ Wesley's reading of *Constitutiones Apostolorum VIII* from Antioch 350-375 was a main inspiration to Wesley's *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* a collection of 166 Hymns, all on the theme of Holy Communion.¹¹

Charles and John both prepared for the Doctoral degree, the Higher bachelor's degree. In 1739 and again in 1741, they were

⁷ Heitzenrater, 1995, p. 21-24

⁸ Wesley *Works* Vol 25

⁹ Wesley *Works* Vol 18, p. 405-406; p. 171; p. 429-453

¹⁰ Wesley *Works* Vol 20, p. 162

¹¹ Wainwright's introduction in *Wesley's Hymns on the Lord's Supper* p. ix-x

in Oxford and gave presentations and written works for the Doctoral degree. The Latin text *Hypocrisy in Oxford* (150 & 151)¹² is one of John's presentations. But before the scheduled public defence, they received the message that their brother, Rector Samuel Wesley, has died suddenly in Bristol, and they left Oxford for Bristol and cancelled the Doctoral defence. We do not find in Wesley's writings any indication that he returned to Oxford for the completion of his Doctoral work.

John Wesley was a student and junior teacher at Christ Church College, Oxford University from 1720 to 1726. Then he was elected fellow of Lincoln College in 1726, and he stayed in that position until 1751. It is quite a long period as an active academic influencer of the theological development at the Oxford University. During a period of 25 years, John Wesley was an influential university teacher of a whole generation of pastors for the Anglican Church. Several of Wesley's published sermons are university lectures presented to the auditorium of the university at St. Mary's Church. The number of sermons presented within the framework of Oxford University indicates the strong influence Wesley had during his academic years. No other theologian has an equivalently frequent numbers of public lectures in Oxford.¹³ And because of the long-term illness of the Vice Chancellor of Lincoln College, John Wesley functioned as the Depute Vice Chancellor in the same period.

Wesley's theological publications are enormous. At the university, he published several texts book for students. In the general theological debate, Wesley published articles and disputes during his whole lifetime. He commented on new theological books. And he remained contemporary regarding academic developments in England and Europe. There exist 450 published titles by Wesley, and if one includes new editions and revised reprintings, there are 2000 publications by John Wesley during his lifetime. Even more were published posthumously. Wesley was indeed one of the most prolific theological authors in Europe. Wesley's focus in his writings covers all themes within the academic fields of theology; from biblical languages, exegesis,

¹² Wesley *Works* Vol 4, p. 408-419

¹³ Wesley *Works* Vol 1, p. 109-116. Of Wesley's University sermons 12 are included in the SOSO collection

church history, dogmatics, philosophy, liturgy, hymnals, preaching of the whole Christian year to medical writings, science of nature, and music.¹⁴ One of the main forerunners of the neo-Wesleyan theology emerging in the 1980s, Albert C. Outler (1908-1989), made the statement that John Wesley is the most influential English-speaking theologian in the eighteenth century.

Wesley is not only influential; he is also one of the theologians who reformulated the European medieval theology into neo-protestant thinking. Between medieval and neo-Protestantism, we find the enlightenment and the philosophy of empiricism. The theology of the Reformation, both the Lutheran, the Calvinist and the Roman Catholic counter reformation, and the period of Orthodoxy within the different confessions, continue to operate and express themselves in medieval themes, thinking and formulation. The enlightenment broke with the medieval thinking and lifted the philosophical perspective to another level. So did the theology of Deism in Britain and theological Rationalism on the European continent. But we find in the theology of Wesley a breakthrough in his total reformulation of protestant theology, and that is one of the reasons why Wesley's theology still is actual in modern times where the effect of the enlightenment is fully implemented in the Western world. Wesleyan theology addresses secularism and materialism.¹⁵

John Wesley's anchorage in European theology is multifarious. Here are some resources to find his background in European thinking:

Wesley's 150 *Sermons on Several Occasions* is often taken as the main resource to Wesley's dogmatic thinking. In the new *Bicentennial Edition of the Works of Wesley* we find a bibliography of Wesley's own quotations of other theologians in the corpus of his own Sermons. It is an amazing 60 pages list of books of theologians from all of Europe. The list shows that Wesley was up to date with the theological development not only from Christian Antiquity to his own time, but also with contemporary publications at European universities of all confessions.¹⁶

¹⁴ Thaarup, 2016, p. 12-18

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 71-80

¹⁶ Wesley *Works* Vol 4, p. 574-634

Wesley's own private library is also an important source for us to find out what did Wesley read and comment on. Wesley had a flat in the New Chapel in Bristol and a flat in Wesley House in London. In both places he collected his own books. When Wesley died, he gave his book collection to the Kingswood School outside Bristol. We have knowledge about Wesley's book collection. On the Duke University webpage under Wesley Study Resources and titled, "Research Resources", we find a number of organized bibliographical guides to Wesley's book collections, including: 1) John Wesley's Reading: Evidence in Kingswood Library. 2) John Wesley's Reading: Book Collection at Wesley's House, London. 3) Remnants of John Wesley's Personal Library. These lists give us an amazing overview of how Wesley was updated on the theological development at European universities.

Some specific examples of how Wesley was dependent on resources from other European theologians must be mentioned:

In 1754 when Wesley published his famous *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, he used Bengelius *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*. Johann Albertus Bengelius (1687-1752) was a Lutheran theologian at the university of Tübingen, and he published his Latin *Gnomon* in 1742. Wesley knew and used this exegetic work in his writing of his English *Explanatory Notes*.

In Wesley's Moravian period, 1736-1740, he found a lot of inspiration in Lutheran orthodox theology, and the Lutheran pietistic thinking of Nikolaus Ludwig Zinzendorf (1700-1760). It was during this period that he was influenced by Luther's prologue to his *Commentary on Romans*, the article on Faith. We know that from Wesley's Aldersgate experience May 24, 1738.¹⁷ After his Moravian conversion, Wesley travelled to Marienburg in Herrnhut and spent months there for studies and conversations with Zinzendorf. No doubt that Zinzendorf saw Wesley as a promoter of the Moravian movement and theology. At that time, Wesley was one of the leaders and founders of the Fetter Lane Society which was organized after the Moravian model as a Band Society. As part of the travel to Herrnhut, Wesley also spent times in Jena and Halle, two centres of Lutheran pietism with universities.

¹⁷ Wesley *Works* Vol 18, p. 242-251

Wesley's relation to Lutheran theology has been discussed in several studies. His use of Luther's *Commentary on Galatians* is ambiguous. On the one hand Wesley is very critical of Luther's position in following the Law and his negative valuation of good deeds. On the other hand, Wesley in some places, references Luther and not Bengelius in specific notes in his *Notes upon the New Testament*.¹⁸

After 1740 Wesley breaks with the Moravians. He leaves the Fetter Lane Society. He comes out of the shadow of Zinzendorf and his thinking. Wesley develops his theology on sanctification. He gives lower priority to his previous understanding of momentaneous salvation. The Aldersgate Experience is not mentioned in Wesley's writings after 1740. Wesley returns to the Anglican focus on the active use of the Means of Grace, especially if you are not yet a Christian. Zinzendorf accuses Wesley of being a Papist and preaching salvation by good deeds when Wesley offers Holy Communion to people publicly and to those not Christian yet. The conflict with the Moravians is one of the main theological conflicts Wesley fights in his lifetime.¹⁹

The other main theological conflict Wesley dealt with is the issue of predestination. One of his opponents on this issue was his Methodist companion from the Oxford Holy Club, Rev. George Whitefield (1714-1770). The position of predestination was shared by many theologians in the Anglican Church, but also the Puritan Movement and many dissenters in England. The theology of predestination dominated Western medieval theology in Europe. Both Martin Luther (1483-1546) and Jean Calvin (1509-1564) were active in the theological fight around this issue. Erasmus Rotterdamus (1466-1536), who lived most of his life in Basel, was also involved in that dispute in opposition to Luther and Calvin. Calvin and the Reformed tradition after him have influenced the Anglican reformation. Calvinist theology is more predominant within Anglicanism than the Lutheran theology is.

The Dutch Reformed professor Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) tried to develop and modify the Calvinist teaching on predestination by developing his understanding of *prevenient grace*. At the Calvinist Synod in Dordrecht 1618-19, the Arminian

¹⁸ Thaarup, 2016, p. 220-221

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 326-329

teaching on prevenient grace was condemned, Jacob Arminius judged for heresy, and double predestination confirmed as doctrine within the Calvinist tradition.²⁰ The Arminian teaching of prevenient grace spread to the British Isles and became a strong theology, especially among the High Churchmen movement. Wesley's father and brothers were all in favour of the *prevenient grace* theology and in opposition to the predestination theology most Puritans embraced. John Wesley used and developed the teaching on *prevenient grace* in his conflict with the Calvinistic inspired theologians, including George Whitefield. The conflict was so deep that Whitefield and Wesley split on the issue. After the conflict over predestination in the 1760-70's Wesley positioned his theology by publishing a periodical named *Arminian Magazine*, a periodical where Wesley opened for testimonies of people who had experienced Sanctification in their life. Wesley gave high priority to his position as the main advocate for the Arminian theology of *prevenient grace* by holding the editorship of this Magazine to himself the rest of his life. No doubt that Wesley and the theology of *prevenient grace* is so strongly combined that many people think that the theology comes from Wesley. It originates from Jacobus Arminius (but not really, because Arminius takes up the forgotten doctrine on *prevenient grace*, a doctrine not discussed since the early Middle Age), and we do not know whether Wesley has studied Arminius writings or has got his theology from the many people within the Anglican tradition in England, who were in favour of this theology. In the whole corpus of Wesley's published writing, we find no references or quotations of Arminius, not even in *Christian Library* Vol 1-50 where the whole church history is represented.²¹

The last example of Wesley's full integration in European theology is Wesley's writings on Church History. Wesley published two great works on Church History. The first work is *History of England* Vol 1-4, 1775. This work is inspired by British church historians like Rapin, Smolleth and Goldsmith. Wesley gives this information in the preface. The second work of Wesley is his *Ecclesiastical History* Vol 1-4, 1781, a history of Christian people

²⁰ Hägglund, 1975, p. 245-246

²¹ Wesley *Works* Vol 13

in Europe from Christian Antiquity to the People called Methodist in England. This work is drawn from Lutheran church historian John Lawrence Mosheim (1693-1755), Göttingen, and his historical writings. In all of Wesley's writings on church history, he shows extended knowledge of the writings of the Anglo-Saxon historian, the venerable Bede (673-735) and his *Ecclesiastical History of the English Church and People* completed in 731.²² He also shows knowledge about *Saxo Grammaticus* (1160-1220), the first 11-century Scandinavian church historian, who wrote in 1208, the Latin books about Celtic mission to Scandinavian countries from 800 to 1200, first printed in Paris 1514.²³

John Wesley's ability to follow the academic developments in Europe is amazing. It is surprising to see how Wesley found and studied copies of books published in places far away from England and in short time after the first publishing date. One example can be found in Wesley's *Journal* from December 28, 1775, where he wrote: "I revised a volume of Latin poems wrote by a gentleman of Denmark." And then Wesley gives his comments and evaluation, including his comments to some quotations of Alexander Pope (1688-1744) and some similarities to the Virgil (70-19 BC) text. The editor of the *Bicentennial Edition of Wesley's Works* has not found the book Wesley studied on December 18, 1775.²⁴ But most likely the actual book is Bolle Willum Luxdorff (1716-1788) *Carmina*, Copenhagen, 1775. An original copy is found at the Royal Library in Copenhagen.²⁵ Five days earlier, on December 23, 1775, Wesley sent a letter to the Swedish theological Society "*Pro Fide et Christianismo*," and confirmed his membership as a correspondent member, and his gladness to hear about the mission to the Laplanders above the Arctic Circle.²⁶ How was it possible, in the year 1775, when John Wesley and John Fletcher (1729-1785) were fully occupied with the theological fight on the issue of predestination, and preoccupied

²² Bede, 731/1955

²³ Wesley *Ecclesiastical* Vol 2, 47f, 56f.

²⁴ Wesley *Works* Vol 22, p. 479

²⁵ [www.kb.dk/discovery/search?search_api_fulltext=Bolle Willum Luxdorff Carmina](http://www.kb.dk/discovery/search?search_api_fulltext=Bolle%20Willum%20Luxdorff%20Carmina)

²⁶ Wesley *Letters*, Telford, Vol VI, 196-197. The University Library in Uppsala have an originale letter from John Wesley to the member of "*Pro Fide et Christianismo*", John Henrick Lidén, dated November 11, 1769, where Wesley answers a number of questions about Methodist theology Lidén had written to Wesley about.

with the Methodist societies all over the British Islands, when he often preached more than one sermon every day, and occupied with several book publications, to find and comment on an academic book in Latin published only in Copenhagen, the same year, and to comment on the work of a theological Society in Stockholm? But he did, and the facts indicate that Wesley was indeed informed about what was going on in the academic world all over Europe, where he likewise contributed to common theological development during his whole lifetime.

Above all John Wesley was an Anglican. The Anglican tradition has formed his pastoral identity and his theological thinking.²⁷ And still modern Anglican theologians use Wesley's writings as representative for Anglican theological positions.²⁸ But Wesley was also a reformer of the Anglican tradition. His theological contributions may be understood as a reformation of the Anglican church.

The Anglican tradition holds several doctrinal texts and confessional statements. Similar to the European continental protestant *Status Confessionis* documents that we find in Lutheran and Calvinist denominations. And at the same time, different from the continental Protestantism, Anglicanism defines the theological position in a combination of doctrinal documents, and documents for regulation of Liturgy and church order, or what the Reformed tradition calls the *Discipline*. John Wesley was loyal to this Anglican way of ecclesiastical and confessional definitions, but he was indeed a reformer of the same.²⁹

The Anglican *39 Articles of Religion* John Wesley revised to the *24 Articles of Religion* given to the founding conference in America, when the *Episcopal Methodist Church* was created on the initiative of John Wesley in 1784. Wesley's revision of the articles was a reduction of the numbers of articles, and it was a reduction of the content of several of the articles. The results of that changed the focus in several of the articles and sharpened the profile. Even doctrinal elements were deleted, e.g., in the article on Original Sin.³⁰ Wesley's reformed 24 Articles of Religion are

²⁷ Baker, 1970

²⁸ Allchin, 1988

²⁹ Baker, 1970, p. 7-21; p. 304-323

³⁰ Thaarup, 2016, p. 274-278

today the basic *Status Confessionis* document in many Methodist Churches in the tradition of American Methodism.³¹

An additional primary Anglican document stating true Christianity is the *Homilies*, edited and authorised under King Edward VI (1537-1553), which is the reason why they are called the *Edwardian Homilies*. The Homilies state the special way in Anglican tradition that theological positions and statements are presented in the original form of Christian Theology, the form of preaching, proclamation of the Gospel. This way of stating the theological position is the opposite of the European continental Bekenntnisschriften, or philosophic formulations used for defining the content and legality of doctrines and framing the boundaries of true Christian teaching. The Homilies state what is good Christian teaching on a given issue. Focus is on the centre of doctrine, not the limits, or the borders where heresy begins. John Wesley replaced the *Edwardian Homilies* with his own *Standard Sermons*. The *Standard Sermons* have the same function as the main theological standard within the Methodist tradition as the *Edwardian Homilies* have in the Anglican tradition.³²

The main instrument to keep the Anglican tradition together is the *Book of Common Prayer*. This prayer and liturgy book highlights the Anglican Arminian position: Unity and loyalty in Worship and liturgy, freedom, and pluralism in doctrine. The Anglican Puritan position was the opposite. Wesley used the Book of Common Prayer during his whole life as a pastor, and he was loyal to the resources of liturgy. John and Charles always used the liturgy of the Book of Common Prayer when they conducted worship services in the New Room in Bristol and in the New Chapel, City Road in London, and other consecrated buildings. But John Wesley also reformed the Book of Common Prayer when he gave the *Sunday Service* to the new Episcopal Methodist Church in America in 1784. The *Sunday Service* is a radical reformed and reduced version of Common Prayer Book, and in the preface to this tool of liturgical standards, he ordered the ordained preachers in America to perform the Communion Service every Lord's Day. The wisdom behind this use of the Common Prayer Book and Wesley's reformed book *Sunday Service*, is to

³¹ UMC *Discipline* 2016, p. 65-77

³² Thaarup, 2016, p. 139-140

emphasise that what we are doing in worship is keeping us together and giving us the same theological identity. Standards for spiritual life led to theological identity.³³

A major part of *Book of Common Prayer* is the liturgical singing. The Anglican Church has sung liturgy, where the whole service is singing of bible texts, litany texts, prayers, and liturgy of the eucharist. Charles and John Wesley produced enormous numbers of hymns. In total, the two brothers stood behind 34 published Hymn Books. John Wesley even published manuals with the music, classic music notes. Wesley used the hymn for doctrinal teaching and formation. The hymnals and the praxis of singing were used catechistically and as a pedagogical and liturgical tool. Wesley's Hymn books were organized after theological structure, some of them even after an *Ordo Salutis* thinking, and it turned the hymns into catechism. The *Wesleyan Hymn Books* were indeed a reformation of the Book of Common Prayer.

The Anglican focus on strictness in praxis and liturgy, yet flexibility and plurality in doctrine also had implications for the way congregational life was performed. The Anglican Puritan tradition worked with small groups and religious societies, like Lutheran pietism did on the European continent.³⁴ The Moravians and university people in Cambridge and Oxford had formed religious societies, bands, and classes. Wesley's father was a life-long member of SPCK (*Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge*). Wesley turned his tutorial groups of students in Oxford into spiritual formation groups, apropos the Holy Clubs. When John Wesley gave his advice to the Methodist Societies, Bands and Classes, he shaped his guidelines clearly referring to Paul's advice in 2 Cor 13:5-10, and the result of this advice is Wesley's *General Rules*. Wesley's small group advice differs from the Moravian way of marathon-prayer groups and from the Lutheran Pietistic way of mini-worship-preaching-groups. Wesley's reformation of the small group work in the congregations focused on spiritual formation as a result of conversations among the individuals in the group and developing sanctification and a practical social holiness in daily life.³⁵

³³ Wesley *Sunday Service* 1784

³⁴ Thaarup, 2016, p. 148

³⁵ Watson, 1987

The Calvinist reformation developed a strong focus on Church order and governance, called *Discipline*, and focus on the governing instrument - *The Synod*. In Calvinist tradition it is difficult to understand the church without the Synod. This theology also influenced Anglican tradition. Wesley learned the function of Synod when he took Holy Order, and when he was Fellow of Lincoln College. He learned that ordination and Holy Order were strongly dependent on having the collegial relationship to fellow ordained in regular spiritual praxis, in sharing leadership and in mutual responsibility. The Anglican understanding of Holy Order is unique in Protestant Churches and is parallel to what we find in Catholic and Orthodox monasteries. Wesley's reading of Lord Peter King's (1669-1734) book on the praxis of the Primitive Church sharpened his understanding.³⁶ The theology on Synod and collegial responsibility in leadership lie behind Wesley's conference system. The same thinking is behind the praxis of using the Minutes of the conferences as a steering instrument for the movement, what Wesley called the connexion.³⁷ Later in the Methodist development, the Minutes have been turned into legislation, constitution and Discipline, something different from the content and function of the Minutes. But Wesley's conference system and use of the Minutes as guidelines for the mission is indeed a reformation of Holy Order and Synod theology.

Wesley's position as a reformer of Anglicanism was strongly underlined in his actions in St. Mary Chapel, Oxford University, where he presented his most radical Sermons with his protestant key positions. St. Mary Chapel was the place where archbishop Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) was judged under the counter reformation and by Catholic Queen Mary I (Bloody Mary 1516-1558), and afterwards burned to death on Broad Street outside the church. John Wesley's reformatory work reintroduced the most radical position of Thomas Cranmer. Anglican revisions of the 39 Articles of Religion, of the Book of Common Prayer and of the Edwardian Homilies weakened Thomas Cranmer's protestant theology. Wesley presented twelve of his clear doctrinal Sermons on the place in Oxford, where Cranmer ended his

³⁶ King, 1691

³⁷ Wesley *Works* Vol 10

life as a martyr of the Anglican Church. John Wesley's reintroduction of Cranmer's original position is the reason why Church historians afterwards have credited Wesley for being the one who took the protestant position to victory in England and defeated the theology of Deism.³⁸

The purpose of this chapter is to show how John Wesley was fully integrated in academic European theology. He was strongly formed by many European theologians and traditions. And he himself was a lifelong contributor to the neo-protestant theology.

Wesleyan theology and churches in Europe

By Jørgen Thaarup

Because the Wesley brothers were European theologians and related to the theological traditions of protestant theology, both the academic theology at the universities and the confessional dogmatics of the churches, their influences into the development of modern European theology are broad and widespread and not limited to specific churches or church organizations.

First of all, the Wesley brothers addressed the theological development in the Church of England and Anglican academic theology. Secondly, the Wesleyan tradition of theological development took place in those inner church organizations and new church structures where the names Wesleyan and Methodist were used. In addition to this, we also find Wesleyan theology in the outspring of new ecclesiastical formations like the *Free Methodist church*, *Church of Nazarene*, *Salvation Army* and the *Pentecostal churches* of the nineteenth and twentieth century. Some of these structures of Wesleyan tradition of churches and theology are related to the *World Methodist Council* and the *European Methodist Council*, but not all. The ecumenical organizations with the names of Wesleyan and Methodist churches do not completely exhaust the full Wesleyan tradition of theology.

³⁸ Hägglund, 1975, p. 320–322

Member churches of the *European Methodist Council*

- The *United Methodist Church* in the countries: Albania, Algeria, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Sweden, Tajikistan, Switzerland, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

- The *Methodist Church of Great Britain*.

- The *Methodist Church in Ireland*.

- The *Methodist Church in Portugal* (Igreja Evangélica Metodista Portuguesa).

- The Opera for the *Evangelical Methodist Churches in Italy* (Opera per le Chiese Evangeliche Metodiste in Italia, PCEMI).

- The *Spanish Evangelical Church* (Iglesia Evangélica Española).

- The *Church of the Nazarene* in countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Kosovo, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Switzerland.

- The churches in the *Western Mediterranean Field* of the Eurasia Region of the church.

- The European District of the *Korean Methodist Church*.

- The *Uniting Church in Sweden* (Equmeniakyrkan).

- The *European Wesleyan Church* in countries: Albania, Austria, Bosnia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Great Britain, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Spain.

- The *Wesleyan Holiness Church*.

European Churches of the Wesleyan tradition but not members of the *European Methodist Council*

- The *Free Methodist Church*.

- The *African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church*.

- The *African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AME Zion) Church*.

- The *Christian Methodist Episcopal (CME) Church*.

- The *Autonomous Methodist Denomination*.

- The *United Protestant Church of Belgium*.

- *Salvation Army* in most European countries.

- (*Pentecostal churches?*).

This booklet tries to collect and introduce the comprehensive development of Wesleyan theology in Europe in the history and life of all these churches and Wesleyan traditions. The work has shown that the result of the presentation is not fair to the rich theological development in all the different Wesleyan traditions and branches. Regardless of the many lacks and missing information, take this presentation as a first draft to a not yet written common European Wesleyan history of theology. Read this presentation as an open invitation to young theologians to write a more complete introduction to Wesleyan theology in Europe. What Thomas Langford gave to American Wesleyan theology in his *Practical Divinity* from 1983 is a volume that is similarly needed for *European Practical Divinity, Theology in the Wesleyan Tradition*. Our rich European theological production is present among us. Who will write it?

Wesleyan theology in Great Britain in the nineteenth century

Extracted from Langford: Practical Divinity

Through its first century, several persons played important roles in the theological development that was an essential part of the Wesleyan tradition. To provide a sense of this development in Britain, we shall look at John Fletcher (1729-1785), Adam Clarke (1760-1832), Richard Watson (1781-1833), W. B. Pope (1822-1903), and Hugh Price Hughes (1847-1902). The historical sweep and range of positions are wide, but these theologians represent some of the characteristic formations of the tradition: They hold together piety and learning, intense love of God and of neighbour, biblical authority, and ethical living.

Time does not divide in human history, and one major figure does not necessarily succeed another. John Fletcher was Wesley's contemporary and was invited to become Wesley's successor; he was also the most important early interpreter of Wesleyan themes in theology. But Fletcher died before Wesley. In order to describe the importance of Fletcher and his work in the developing tradition, it is necessary to review his distinctive qualities and

theological interests. Of French Huguenot stock, John William Fletcher (Jean Guillaume de la Flechere) was a gifted classical theologian. In the controversy between Wesley and some Calvinist evangelicals, which came to a climax between 1770 and 1778, Fletcher produced almost everything he ever wrote and, in this conflict, provided Wesley with strong theological support. Fletcher's book on *Christian Perfection* is one of the most translated books into other European languages and used in the first period of Methodism on continental Europe.

The controversy with the Calvinists was the most basic struggle of the evangelical revival. Whitefield's adoption of Calvinistic positions initiated the dispute in 1739, and soon Wesley joined in the debate on the issue of God's "election" of the individual human being in his acts of salvation. Wesley and Fletcher rejected Calvinistic positions on predestination to damnation, irresistible grace, and final perseverance.

Through his writings, Fletcher of Madeley became the spokesman for and systematiser of the positions Wesley had taken. Wesley accepted Fletcher's presentation on grace and free will and commended it to the preachers. These "checks" undergirded the preaching of salvation as being available to all people through Christ's redemption; in addition, they expounded the privileges and obligations of Christian living.

As the Wesleyan tradition moved into the nineteenth century, new voices spoke to the changing situation. Adam Clarke continued the basic direction of Methodist theology in his development of biblical interpretation. In many ways Clarke was the epitome of all Wesley might have hoped for from his preachers: He combined biblical scholarship and practical concern in uncommon ways. After becoming an itinerant preacher, he continued his studies and joined the first rank of scholars in England.

As a scholar Clarke was equally impressive. A linguist of unusual ability, he worked with the British and Foreign Bible Society to translate the Scripture into numerous foreign languages, translated the New Testament into the English of the day, wrote a commentary on the Old and New Testaments. Typical of the orthodoxy of his time in his understanding of biblical authority, he assumed that the Scripture provide a complete interpretation of the nature and will of God. It is the task of the biblical theologian, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to render with care

the meaning of Scripture and to present its application. Clarke was always, in intention, such a biblical theologian.

The pursuit of theological development within the Wesleyan movements leads us quickly to Richard Watson, who was the most influential theologian within Methodism on both sides of the Atlantic during the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century.

Watson was the systematiser of Wesley's thought. Covering an unusual range of interests – from classical studies and world religions to previous theologians – he was intense, serious, and diligent, a writer whose life and thought were as sharply chiselled as his bodily features. His intellectual strong point was the organisation of ideas, and his dominant quality was persistence. Orderly of mind, his major work, *Theological Institutes*, is clearly drawn and tenaciously carried through with a logical development of content. His theology was practical, a theology to underwrite the life of a believing and witnessing community.

But the worlds of Wesley and Watson were in clear contrast. Wesley's world had been open; one feels the chill of the early morning air, the push of crowds and rigor of rutted roads; there were rioting mobs and contagious religious conversions. Wesley had been at the centre of a religious storm; there was danger and excitement, fear, and hope. A new movement was underway, too powerful to be contained.

The world of Richard Watson was both more restricted and differently challenged. Methodism continued to expand – even more than in Wesley's day – but it had moved inside. The walls of the chapels became clearer boundaries; enthusiasm was channelled into ritual; and living together as a concrete community was found to be most difficult. The Wesleyan movement also experienced some of its most bitter attacks even as it was gaining acceptance by the larger society. Many persons regarded the movement with uncertainty and perhaps amusement, and not a few with disdain, but Methodism was vitally alive, even as it was under pressure to define its identity. Increasingly, Methodism was typified by the tradesman and greengrocer, the schoolmaster and the baker, rather than by the embattled witness or the fearless hymn-singer.

Richard Watson was of a different temper and assumed a different role than had Wesley. He was also a preacher, but as a

theologian he understood his task as being a defender of the faith; he would argue for a validity of inherited Christian truth; he was an apologist. His chief external opponents were those who aligned themselves Deist thought. The principal theological conviction of these thinkers was that the native rational capacity of human beings is sufficient for the discovery of religious truth. God was understood as the creator of the universe, but the Creator was detached from the created order, offering no direct or personal revelation. The light of “nature” was the foundation of all knowledge. Richard Watson gathered a reasoned response for the Methodists. He aligned the Wesleyan tradition with a wide community of Christian theologians and argued for human reliance upon God’s sovereignty as Creator, Sustainer, and Revealer. He was, he insisted, neither a Calvinist nor a Pelagian; he intended to conform to Wesleyanism, which, he believed, continued a major stream from the Reformation through English traditions. He advocated this mediating position extensively in *Theological Institutes*.

Nevertheless, it is the case that in *Theological Institutes* there are few references to Wesley’s own statements, and hereby hangs an important point. It is fundamental that from the beginning, John Wesley was not considered a framer of doctrine whose interpretations were definitive. The crucial issue, rather, is what Wesley pointed to the gospel of God in Jesus Christ, insisted upon biblical foundations for doctrine, and affirmed the sovereignty of God and the graciously granted worth of human life.

We move now across half a century, to William Burt Pope. Much had transpired, especially in the effort of Methodism to establish its identity. Pope was a thoroughly learned biblical scholar and systematic whose biblical study underwrote his theological work. The central idea in Pope’s thought was that of divine grace as effected in human life by the Holy Spirit. This grace is expressed preventiently in justification and, finally, in sanctification. The explication of these themes is found in Pope’s major work, *A Compendium of Christian Theology*. Theology may be expressed as biblical or historical arrangement. This last form was Pope’s method, and in this he exhibited a confessional stance that takes doctrine as its framework, is illustrated from history, and verified by Scripture. Yet Pope, with all his brilliance and disciplined study, was isolated from the newer currents in British

intellectual life – Darwinianism and idealistic philosophy. Pope both represented and perpetuated the conservative stance of British Methodist theology. The tensions between inheritance and anticipation, between retention and exploration were relaxed, and he sacrificed the latter possibilities for the sake of the former values. In this Pope preserved, with strength and increased clarity, the essential thrust of the Wesleyan position; but he also encouraged lack of attention to the imposing intellectual issues of the day. There are times when conservation is meritorious, and Pope, through his caution, kept sharp focus on the redemptive grace of God in Jesus Christ. That, in a fluid age, was no small contribution.

A new spirit was evident among Methodist theologians at the close of the century, and a changing set of sensitivities was projected through one man, Hugh Price Hughes, who cut different paths for some Methodists to follow. Grandson of a prominent Welsh Methodist preacher and a remarkable evangelist himself, Hughes' influence was affected through his editorial work as well as by his gift of oratory. In 1884 he established the *Methodist Times*, a periodical, where Hughes took up such issues as education, temperance, peace, labour, and economic life. The application of the gospel message to the social context became a burning passion, a singular obsession. Hughes charged that the church had dealt too exclusively with individual piety and that it must now attend to "business, pleasure and politics."³⁹ In 1887, in evidence of this social concern, he helped to establish the West London Mission. Typical of his stance was his warning that Christians should never "think of ourselves apart from Christ or think of ourselves apart from mankind."⁴⁰

Christianity of the Methodist variety was now involved in the political life of the British nation. His theology was practical; it involved proclaiming the Kingdom and serving its causes. Hughes regarded theology as the constant handmaiden of social concern; thought must evoke action. Hughes was aware of the importance of theology, but he was even more interested in progressing to the consequences of theology. He was not a scholar in the sense of Clarke, Watson, or Pope. He possessed neither

³⁹ J.G. Mantle, 1902, p. 85

⁴⁰ Hughes, 1894, p. 41

their intellectual discipline nor their technical knowledge. He was a practical theologian – all of life, he insisted, was to be transformed. Hugh Price Hughes represented a change of time and a new awareness. British Methodism was being drawn from its isolation. Hughes was a spokesman for the linking of evangelism with mission tasks directed toward the social order. He invigorated the interaction of preaching and service.

First half twentieth-century British Methodism

Most extracted from Langford: Practical Divinity

As the nineteenth century yielded to the twentieth, the stream of Wesleyan theology that had moved through well-defined channels now picked up influx from numerous new sources and overspread its neat boundaries. With British society and other churches, Methodism experienced a pervasive sense of change; the altering British situation called for new self-understanding and new mission strategies.

It is too easy to describe these challenging influences as the “secularization” of society. But clearly, a change in value-commitment on a cultural level was taking place. The central importance of spiritual well-being, of ultimate hopes, and of divine/human relationship was no longer granted by the general populace. British culture was exploring new foundations, and religious thought was intensely involved in this search.⁴¹

A chief theological representative among the Methodists during that period was John Scott Lidgett (1854-1953). He was responsive to a wide contemporary intellectual context, including German theology. Contributions that stimulated his interest were legion: the writings of John Henry Newman, the science of Charles Darwin, the philosophy of Herbert Spencer, the polemics of George Tyrrell and Thomas Huxley, the new biblical criticism, and the prevailing interest in Kant and Hegel, along with the theological and practical activities of Charles Kingsley and Frederick Denison Maurice. To mention these influences is to indicate

⁴¹ Langford, 1969

Lidgett's awareness of a world radically different from that of his Methodist theological predecessors.

"The grace that bestows" was a dominant thesis; and focus upon this theme, Liggett claimed, sharply differentiated his time from the past. He found this difference expressed in several possible negative convictions: the impossibility of maintaining exaggerated notions of individualism or other worldliness, a Calvinistic understanding of God's sovereignty, a biblical fundamentalism, a sharp distinction between spiritual and secular realms. Against these persuasions he sought to give fresh expression to the meaning of grace; hence he positively affirmed the Fatherhood of God, in contrast to a primary stress upon the omnipotent sovereignty of God, the immanence of God with its implications of divine kinship in the character of Jesus Christ, and the conviction that reality is rationally consistent and coherent. He stated his thesis tersely: "Grace redeems and renews what creation has implanted from the first in potentiality and promise."⁴²

To present his point of view, Lidgett wrote several books. The themes of *The Spiritual Principle of the Atonement* (1898) and *The Fatherhood of God in Christian Life and Thought* (1902) set the direction for his constructive theology. To read Lidgett's theological work is to enter the arena of contemporary German theology, especially that of Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1884) and Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930). More than any previous English Methodist theologian, he espoused the essential positions of Protestant liberalism, and he constructed his interpretation to make these themes clear. A significant aspect of his perspective has been a dialectical tension between traditional theological interests and new forms of social mission and ecclesial life.

While Lidgett must be prominently mentioned in twentieth-century Methodist theology, the truth is that British Methodism expanded its greater strength in scriptural study and biblical theology.

In 1892 Arthur S. Peake (1865-1929) received a call to teach at the young Primitive Methodist theological institute Hartley College, in Manchester. In 1897 his *Guide to Biblical Study* was published, followed by commentaries on Hebrews and Colossians and *The Problem of Suffering in The Old Testament*. In

⁴² Lidgett, 1936, p. 146-148, 153

1904 he became professor of biblical criticism and exegesis at Manchester University, the first time a non-Anglican had been elected to such a position in an English university. Peake's primary arena was biblical study, and his ability to make critical scholarship acceptable to a suspicious constituency was one of his chief contributions. Indeed, he may have done more than any other scholar to introduce his nation to critical study of the Bible on a popular level.

There were other notable students of Scripture among the British Methodists. J.H. Moulton (1863-1917) worked carefully with the Greek language in Egyptian papyri.⁴³ W.T. Howard (1880-1952) was an exceptionally student of the Fourth Gospel, and his *Christianity According to St. John* (1943) exemplifies, and *The Fourth Gospel in Recent Criticism and Interpretation* (1955) reaffirms.⁴⁴ Charles Ryder Smith (1873-1956), tutor and principal of Richmond College and later professor of theology at the University of London, wrote several books on biblical themes: *The Bible Doctrine of Salvation* (1941), *The Bible Doctrine of Sin* (1953), and *The Bible Doctrine of Grace* (1956).

R. Newton Flew (1886-1962) was a principal of Wesley House, Cambridge, he wrote *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Thought* (1934) and *Jesus and His Church* (1938). Flew helped set British Methodism's ecclesiastical self-understanding after the union of British Methodist churches in 1932 and prepared the denomination for ecumenical discussions.⁴⁵

Vincent Taylor (1887-1968) was a writer on New Testament topics. He introduced form-critical studies of the Gospels and added valuable commentaries on Mark and Romans. From Taylor's writings we also find: *Jesus and His Sacrifice* (1937), *The Atonement in New Testament Teaching* (1940), and *Forgiveness and Reconciliation* (1941). On the theme of worship and the Lord's Supper, Taylor wrote: *The names of Jesus* (1953), *The Life and Ministry of Jesus* (1954), and *The Person of Christ in New Testament Teaching* (1958).⁴⁶

⁴³ Moulton, 1899

⁴⁴ Lofthouse, 1954

⁴⁵ Wakefield, Gordon, 1971

⁴⁶ Taylor, 1940

Norman Henry Snaith (1898-1982) was an Old Testament scholar at Wesley College in Headingley, Leeds. He wrote prolifically on Old Testament textual matters and produced commentaries on several biblical books, including Leviticus and Numbers, Job, and Amos. He also wrote an introduction, *The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament* (1944) in addition to special thematic studies as *Mercy and Sacrifice* (1953) and *Inspiration and Authority of the Bible* (1956). In two small books, Snaith, with a direct, sometimes blunt style, has evidenced a strongly orthodox position. In *I Believe in ...* (1959) he plainly affirmed the elements of the Nicene Creed, and in *The God That Never Was* (1971), he argues that this is the message contemporary people need.

Most distinguished biblical scholar is Revd. C. Kingsley Barrett (1917-2011) of Durham University, who has made significant contributions to New Testament studies, especially in his *The Gospel of St. John* (1976) and his commentaries on *Romans* (1957) and *First* (1968) and *Second Corinthians* (1973).

Professor of New Testament exegesis at the University of Aberdeen, I. Howard Marshall (1934-2015), has had several books published including *The Origins of New Testament Christology* (1976), *Commentary on Luke* (1978) and *Last Supper and Lord's supper* (1980).

The last British Methodist biblical scholar in the outgoing twentieth-century entering into the twenty-first century is James D.G. Dunn (born 1939), of Durham University. Among his writings are: *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (1977), and *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (1980), and commentaries on many New Testament books.

Revd. Johnny Jonsson (born 194?) from the University College Stockholm published in 2016 a commentary on Ephesians *Efesierbrevet*, which is a seldom contribution to the same tradition of European scholarly and European inspired New Testament exegesis.

Prof. Franz Hildebrandt (1909-1985) was a Lutheran scholar from Berlin, who in England before World War II first became Anglican and then Methodist. His many theological writings took place in Cambridge, Edinburgh and at Drew University America, one of them is *Christianity According to the Wesleys* (1956).

Theological interpreters in twentieth-century British Methodism

Extracted from Langford: Practical Divinity

Expanded by Jørgen Thaarup

A major area of theological activity has centred around the study of the Reformation, and especially Martin Luther, by the Methodist historical theologians E. Gordon Rupp (1910-1986) and Philip S. Watson (1909-1983). Both have explored the Protestant Reformation for its own value and have related their work to the Methodist tradition. These two scholars represent British Wesleyanism's response to the neo-Reformation revival in the post-World War II period.

Philip S. Watson's major contribution, *Let God Be God* (1949), was a seminal study of the sovereignty of God in Martin Luther's thought. This motif, Watson demonstrated, underlay Luther's understanding of salvation and the church. Watson reexplored this theme in *The Concept of Grace* (1959).

E. Gordon Rupp made basic contributions to Luther studies in *The Righteousness of God* (1953) and has done primary work on the Reformation traditions, on the Continent and in England, in *Principalities & Powers* (1952) and *Methodism in Relation to the Protestant Tradition* (1954), and *Just Men* (1977).

Other British Methodists scholars have expressed interest in Wesleyan theological themes in both general and specific ways.

Leslie D. Weatherhead (1893-1970) focused on psychological interpretation of Christian experience and wrote a provocative booklet *The Will of God* (1944) and many books on the Pastoral Theology, e.g., *Psychology and the Cure of Souls* (1934). Several of Weatherhead's books were translated into other European languages.⁴⁷

One of the prominent preachers in London, William Edwin Sangster (1900-1960), wrote under the social work under World War II in Central Hall a study of Wesley's doctrine of sanctification, *The Path to Perfection* (1943), with the focus on the biblical foundation of this doctrine. In the field of Pastoral Theology

⁴⁷ Weatherhead, Leslie D. *Psykologien och själens hälsa* (1939)

Sangster is known as the author of *The Craft of Sermon Construction* (1954) and *The Craft of Sermon Illustration* (1954), two books used in pastoral training at several European Seminaries.

Rupert E. Davies (1909-1994), spokesman for Methodism, has specialized in the study of John Wesley, and in *What Methodists Believe* (1976), he sets Wesleyan doctrine on the broad ground of beliefs many Christians hold in common. Only in a concluding chapter does he find distinctive characteristics in Methodism's combination of spontaneous and ordered forms of worship, its social concerns, its universal understanding of the scope of the gospel, and its utilization of the laity. In *Methodism* (1963), Davies gives a quick and lively view of Wesley's theology as rooted in the theme of grace, but there is no account of the historical development of this theological tradition.

The Principal of Cliff College, Revd. Arthur Skevington Wood (1917-1993) wrote in a scholarly study of John Wesley as Evangelist and revival preacher *The Burning Heart. John Wesley: Evangelist* (1967).

British minister Revd. Colin Morris (1929-2018) was a famous broadcast speaker at the BBC. He was a strong ecumenical and mission theologian, and his voice was spread, not only in England, but all over Europe. His influential booklet *Include me out* (1968) was translated to several European languages and was an instrument to lift up what the *World Council of Churches* in Uppsala 1968 focus on with the theme: *The world writes the agenda for the churches*. Morris published a number of booklets in England.

John Stacey contributed in 1977 with his *Groundwork of Theology*, an introduction to Methodist doctrine of Christian faith.

Two major new characters must be listed in the history of European Methodist Theology. Both grew out of British Methodist tradition and were members of the British conference, and both of them moved to America and contributed to the development of the neo-Wesleyan Theology from professorships at Duke University.

Revd. Frank Baker's (1910-1999) focus was history and doctrinal theology. His major work, *John Wesley and the Church of England* (1970), opened a new area of Wesley-studies among several American scholars. In 1960, Frank Baker was appointed

associate professor at Duke University. It was the very beginning of the Duke Wesleyan Study Centre.

Revd. Geoffrey Wainwright (1939-2020) was a classic European theologian, who became professor at Duke University. His *Doxology, The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life* (1980) has been spread globally, translated, and used as textbook in pastoral training in many denominations. *Doxology* is a full Systematic Theology constructed and rooted in the sources of Christian Liturgy and Worship. Wainwright was the leading Methodist voice in the process and completion of the ecumenical main document of the Twentieth-century, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, WCC, Lima* (1983), and in several bilateral ecumenical negotiations Wainwright has chaired the process and represented the World Methodist Council.

David Lowes Watson (born 1934) taught early Methodist history and ecclesiology at Wesley Seminary, Washington DC, and William J. Abraham (1947-2021) who taught Evangelism and Church Renewal at Asbury Seminary, Kentucky. Both are examples of contemporary Methodist theologians from the British Isles, who made their academic carrier at Methodist universities in the USA.

In 2009 the Oxford Press published the large handbook of Wesleyan theology. William J. Abraham together with James E. Kirby was the editor of this magnificent volume with contributions by scholars from all traditions represented within the World Methodist Council: *The Oxford Handbook of Methodist Studies* (2009). European contributors e.g.: Manfred Marquardt, Martin Welling, David M. Chapman and Sergei V. Nikolaev.

Continental European theological development

By Jørgen Thaarup

Some extracts from Langford: Practical Divinity

Methodism on the European continent came from British Methodism and is often in history named Wesleyan Methodism in Europe. We find Wesleyan Methodism in central Europe, in Italy and on the Iberian Peninsula. Odd Hagen (1905-1970) was a dean

at the Methodist Theological Seminary in Gothenburg, and he wrote a historical research on Methodist influence on continental Europe before any Methodist mission or congregation was established in continental Europe: *Preludes to Methodism in Northern Europe* (1961). Hagen's history book shows several contacts between British Methodists and the European continent, e.g., Methodists in the British Army under the Napoleon-Wars, British Methodist soldiers in prisons around the European continent.

The history of the British Methodist pastor George Scott (1804-1874) in Sweden is one of the interesting stories about Wesleyan Methodist influence on continental Europe. The iron industry and the manufacturing of steam engines were in its very beginning in the 1830s in Sweden. A group of skilled workers from the iron and steam engine factory in Leeds in England migrated, upon invitation, to Stockholm together with their families. Several British Methodist pastors served this group of British migrants to Sweden, among them George Scott who lived in Stockholm 1830-1842, and had a strong influence on several young leaders of several evangelical movements in Sweden. Scott continued to inspire and influence by his letters and correspondence until the late 1860s. Under the leadership of George Scott, the "English Congregation" in Stockholm grew and opened for other people than the British workers. Many young people who were prepared for renewal of the church by Lutheran pietism joined the life of Scott's "English Congregation." Scott's preaching and Methodist theology influenced the thinking and understanding of Christendom. The opening of the worldview to the Anglo-Saxon evangelical protestant renewal of Christianity in the second quarter of the nineteenth century was recognised in George Scott's theology and praxis in Stockholm. The work of the "English Congregation" grew, and they built a new and larger church in the centre of Stockholm, well known as the English Chapel. This Chapel was an exact copy of Wesley's Chapel, City Road in London.⁴⁸ Scott was a brilliant writer, and he started the periodical "The Pietist," and he published a number of booklets, which were spread all over the country. In his writings, Scott presented Methodist theology in its British version of first and second generations of British theologians after John Wesley. He saw

⁴⁸ Alm, 1974, p. 34-37

the Moravian mission in Sweden, and the Lutheran Pietistic influence from Germany, and the movement from the far North, the “Readers”, as influences to prepare for Scott’s British Methodism; and Scott’s Methodism was the continuation and “next step” to these protestant movements. Among the young leaders that George Scott raised and trained for ministry and co-working preaching, was firstly Carl Olof Rosenius (1816-1868), who later became an inspirator for establishing of two Lutheran and inner-church movements in Scandinavia. Rosenius strongly influenced Paul Petter Waldenström (1838-1917), who became the main inspirator behind the fast-growing Mission Covenant Church of Sweden, which separated from the Sweden established church in 1878; and secondly Anders Wiberg (1816-1887), who, after a travel to Germany and America in the 1850s, Wiberg became the leading pastor of the first Stockholm Baptist Church in Sweden (1857). George Scott’s ecclesiological understanding was that Methodism and other evangelical movements should find their places within the existing and historical churches. In England George Scott was raised in a church, where Methodism was an inner church organization, and Scott held the same position as John Wesley, “if the Methodists separate from the church, God will separate from the Methodists.”⁴⁹ From 1850 to 1870, George Scott was the strongest critical voice against American Methodist mission in Sweden. He argued against the Swedish migrants from America who returned to Sweden and tried to establish free churches in Sweden. Scott saw the American Methodists’ eager to establish own churches in Sweden as the most harmful threat to the version of British Methodism that he and his fellow pastors had planted as an inner-church movement in Sweden. Scott continued to write letters and articles to supporters of keeping the Methodist Movement and pietistic movements included in the structure of the Lutheran Established Church of Sweden. The English Chapel was violated by an angry crowd in 1842, and George Scott had to flee from the country to save his life, and the Chapel was closed down for activities for two decades, because people and the authorities were frightened that the English Chapel should be a hotbed for free church initiatives and church splitting tendencies in Sweden. The amazing story about George

⁴⁹ Baker, 1970, p. 309

Scott in Stockholm, Sweden, is a story about a dramatic clash of American and British Methodism on the continent of Europe, a clash of the different understanding of Methodist ecclesiology and praxis. The formation of *the Uniting Church in Sweden* in 2011 is a uniting of the three free churches in Sweden, which came out of the influences of George Scott's work in Sweden. The leaders and founding fathers of the Mission Covenant Church in Sweden, the Baptist Church in Sweden, and the Methodist Church in Sweden, were all rooted in the English Chapel mission in Stockholm under the leadership of George Scott, and none of them took actions to separate from George Scott and his British Methodism. The inner-church organization *Evangeliska FosterlandsStiftelsen* (established 1856) is also one of the direct successors of George Scott's work and Methodist theology on Sanctification. In 1928, Gunnar Westin (1890-1967) wrote a two-volume large dissertation *George Scott och Hans Verksamhet i Sverige*, Vol I; the volume II contains Scott's unpublished writings and letters.

From the perspective of theology, Paul Petter Waldenström was a strong critical voice in opposition to the dominant Augustinian-Lutheran understanding of the atonement and the whole forensic setup of the interpretation of what Christ has done for us. Waldenström's teaching on the reconciliation focuses on the love of God in action and Christ's identification with human beings in their whole life, and not the judicial implications of the human divine relation. Waldenström started the conflict on Christ's atonement in Scandinavia, and this conflict was one the reasons why the Mission Covenant Church was forced out of the Lutheran Church instead of being an inner-church Religious Society like other Rosenius and Scott inspired organisations. This theological discussion continued five to six decades later with contributions of Lutheran theologians like Anders Nygren (1890-1978), Gustaf Aulén (1879-1977) and Hjalmer Lindroth (1893-1979), and the development in this discussion moved the understanding of the atonement away from the single minded and strict forensic understanding of the atonement to a more neo-Protestant understanding, more in line with Wesleyan theology. Harald Lindström's (1905-1997) *Wesley & Sanctification* (1946) is a final contribution into this discussion of the core meaning of what Christ has done for us and our salvation.

The migration from Europe to America from 1830 to 1914 is the main period where American Methodism influenced continental Europe, and several Methodist Churches and movements were organized in Europe because of this migration. Again, between World War I and World War II intensive mission into continental Europe took place, now especially in countries where Roman Catholicism was dominant. It was understood as the Evangelical Marshall Aid to non-evangelical countries in Europe.⁵⁰

The character of Methodist influence on continental Europe was Methodism formed by the theological marks of development in American Methodism. From 1830 to 1870 we first have the *Second Great Awakening* in America. It was an awakening through all protestant denominations, and a movement that formed the evangelical and individual focus on salvation. The Second Great Awakening invented both the alter-call and the Camp Meetings as important instruments for church growth. The Second Great Awakening told the narrative about John Wesley from the new perspective that the Aldersgate experience is the core centre to understand his theology and revival. The Second Great Awakening gave American Protestantism its specific theological character and ecclesiological praxis.⁵¹ The Second Great Awakening developed directly into the Holiness theology, and the Holiness movement. The Holiness theology also ran across the boundaries of traditional protestant denominations and actualized the focus on the third article of faith, the function and life of the Holy Spirit. The individual experience of salvation was formulated in a Grace-Christ-centred-language, or a Spirit-Holy-Ghost-centred-language.⁵²

Another movement in American Methodism from 1870 to 1910 was the Social Gospel movement, where Wesley's no-holiness-but-social-holiness was put in focus. This movement brought the diaconal, the social and political issues on the agenda of the Church.⁵³

⁵⁰ UMC *Discipline* 2016 Supplement Northern Europe and Eurasia, p. 12-13

⁵¹ UMC *Discipline* 2016, p. 14-16.

⁵² UMC *Discipline* 2016 Supplement Northern Europe and Eurasia, p. 7

⁵³ Norwood, 1974, p. 391-394

The new migrant Methodist Churches on the European continent were all under the mission boards of the sending American Methodist Churches. And the mission boards were dominated by people influenced by the Social Gospel theology. Frank Mason North (1850-1935) was one of the strong voices to lift the Social Gospel perspective in the mission work in continental Europe. John R. Mott (1865-1955) was another strong voice to give support to the social and diaconal dimension of Christianity, and to support the beginning of the ecumenical theology. John Mott was a lay-person and became the great world leader of the YMCA movement, and he was the primary initiator to the Edinburgh Mission Conference 1910. E. Stanley Jones (1894-1973) was on the same line. But the ethnic Methodist Churches in America were strongly influenced by the Second Great Awakening and the Holiness movement, and their voices dominated the new Methodist Churches in continental Europe.

In Europe, American Methodism primarily found its way to the people who were prepared for Methodism because of influence of different movements of pietism. In many countries dominated by Protestantism in continental Europe, pietism came as a counter movement to the academic and clerical orthodox protestant theology in the seventeenth century. Pietism promoted bible reading, lay-preachers-ministry, prayer- and sermon-reading-meetings and the ecclesiology with focus on the fellowship of believers. Pietism made each family a spiritual small group and promoted organizations of religious societies.

In continental Europe many people saw American Methodism as one new pietistic group among others, and this connection marks European Methodism up to modern time.

The theological development within European Methodism began with the theological training of the first generations of pastors trained in Europe. In the very beginning, many European pastors were trained at the ethnic-language seminaries in America, ethnic-language because each of the European main language-groups were formed in ethnic-language Annual Conferences in America; the splitting in language-defined Annual Conferences continued until the end of World War II.

Simultaneously with the strong connection to ethnic-language seminaries in America, the main language-groups in Continental Europe started pastoral training in Europe. And the first and few

translated textbooks in Methodist Doctrine had an enormous influence on how the first generations of Methodist pastors understood Methodist theology and preached Methodism.

From 1830 and until World War I, the ethnic-language-Methodist-churches defined themselves as one and the same ethnic-language-people on both side of the Atlantic. Methodism was not defined in relation to Nations or political borders in Europe. Wesley never talked about the Methodists as a church; he mostly used the phrase: The people called Methodist. This understanding of Methodists as a *people* on both side of the Atlantic is strongly underlined with the common use of the same sources in the ethnic Methodist Churches in America and the Methodist Churches of the same language in Europe. In 1894, the Norwegian-Danish Press in Chicago published a comprehensive Methodist History Book by Adolf Haagenzen (1835-1911) *Den Norsk-Danske Methodismes Historie Paa begge Sider Havet*, a History with balanced focus on ethnic Methodism in America and in Europe. In 1896, the same Chicago Methodist Press published a Norwegian-Danish Hymn book for the churches in America and in Europe, *Salmebog med Melodier og Noder for Den Biskoppelige Methodistkirkes Norske og Danske Menigheder*. Another example of the common Methodist identity across the Atlantic is the number of biographies of the first-generation Methodist pastors who served both in America and in Europe. Two examples of this is Victor Witting (1825–1906) *Minnen Från mitt lif som Sjöman, Immigrant och Predikant, bland Svenskarna i Amerika och i Sverige* (1902), and N.C. Andersen *Paa Begge Sider af Atlanterhavet* (1911). The two newest studies of the Transatlantic Scandinavian Methodism are Arlow W. Andersen *The Salt of the Earth. A History of Norwegian-Danish Methodism* (1962) and Henry C. Whyman *The Hedstroms and the Bethel Ship Saga. Methodist Influence on Swedish Religious Life* (1992).

World War I changed the European Methodist identity into growing nationalism. Borders of Annual Conferences were defined to follow the borders of the Nation, something not followed before. The World War II even changed the Methodist Church's borders of the Central Conferences, and the function and areas of Methodist bishops in Europe changed because of the outcome of the two World Wars, both of them started in the very center of Europe, where protestant and evangelical Christianity

were the strongest. The two wars changed the Methodist identity into a more nationalistic thinking, and the international and cross-country identity weakened. For the first time Methodist churches started to retell their history from the perspective of Methodism within the Nation – it had never happened before. European Methodists have not yet raised the critical theological question why we still organize the structures of the Methodist Churches in Europe from the perspective of the politically decided borders and power structures, instead of letting the churches define their structures and conferences from the perspective of the mission and the fact that the Methodists are one cross-cultural people.

In the old Books of *Discipline* of the different American Methodist Churches, we find the lists of curricula the churches have adopted for ministerial training. The pastoral education in Methodist theology was a list of books in the language of each country group.⁵⁴

The first Superintendent in Northern Europe, Christian Willerup (1815-1886), translated and published Thomas Ralston's (1806-1891) *Elements of Divinity* (1847) to Danish *Grundrids til Theologien* (1858).

The most used resource for teaching in Methodist theology in the decades around the turn of the century was Samuel Wakefield (1799-1895) *Christian Theology* (1885) translated to Norwegian *Kristelig Theologi* (1888). Wakefield used Watson's *Theological Institutes* and expanded it.

Revd. John Fletcher's *Christian Perfection* (ca. 1770-80) is one of the texts we find translated to several European languages even before translation of Wesley's sermons.

The first Continental European Methodist who wrote a full systematic Theology was Arnold Sulzberger (1832-1907), *Christliche Glaubenslehre* (1872). Sulzberger's Theology was translated into Swedish *Den Kristna Trosläran* in 1886. Sulzberger was rector of the Methodist seminary in Frankfurt. His *Glaubenslehre* represented an orthodox theology built upon the scriptural witness. Aware of both the philosophical and the theological traditions, Sulzberger structured his theology beginning

⁵⁴ *Discipline* of The Methodist Episcopal Church 1912, curricula for the Ministry: p. 524 English, p. 530 German, p. 534 Norwegian and Danish, p. 542 Swedish, p. 548 Finnish, p. 552 Russian, p. 555 Italian, p. 558 Spanish, p. 562 French, p. 564 Bulgarian.

with the doctrine of God, then moved to anthropology, Christology, the Holy Spirit, and last things. The heart of the presentation is the discussion of the person and work of Jesus Christ.

For German speaking European Methodism, we find titles of Bishop Nuelsen (1867-1946), who was the first European person to become a bishop with residence in Zürich, Europe, and one of the early Methodist theologians to write into the German context and language. Nuelsen was an early and courageous leader speaking against National Socialism in Europe. Nuelsen's *Geschichte des Methodismus* (1920) is one of his many historical and theological presentations.

In the period 1881 to 1901 the Swedish-American revivalist Fredrik Franson (1852-1908) travelled around in Scandinavia and Northern Germany. Franson's influence was amazing all over Scandinavia and Germany, and in Sweden it caused an enormous expansion of the Mission Covenant Church. Franson was in Denmark 1884 and 1885, and the Danish Mission Covenanters was a result of Franson's revival meetings. Several Methodist congregations were involved in the work of Franson in Northern Europe. The Danish scholar Emil Larsen (1900-1992) has shown in his *Brydninger* (1965) that Franson's preaching and theology stood in the line of evangelical revivalists from Wesley to Whitefield to Dwight L. Moody (1837-1899) to Franson, the last two names from the evangelical churches in Chicago, where the Second Great Awakening and the Holiness Theology were strong. The Methodists in Scandinavia understood Franson's preaching as Wesleyan tradition.

The intensive contact between European Methodist Churches in Continental Europe and the ethnic Methodist Churches of the same language in America was the same in Baptist and Mission Covenant Churches. In America, the Second Great Awakening and the Holiness Movement have given several churches the same identity of being evangelical and revivalistic with the focus on individual salvation. The same churches in Continental Europe were, because of the contact cross the Atlantic, influenced by the same theology and praxis of hymnals and preaching, and they developed similar theological identities in Continental Europe.

Thomas Barratt (1862-1940) was a British Methodist pastor, serving in the Methodist Church in Norway. He was inspired by

the Social Gospel Theology, and especially in the form of the West London Mission and the Central Mission in London. In 1907 and 1908 Barratt travelled to America to visit ethnic-Methodist-Churches to find support to establish a Central Mission in Oslo, Norway. Barratt did not get support for his Social Gospel project, but he was transformed by an experience of the Holy Spirit, a Pentecostal experience. Returning to Norway and appointed by the Methodist Church in Norway, Thomas Barratt started preaching on the Pentecostal theme, and Barratt is the founder of the Pentecostal revival in Scandinavia. Barratt left the Methodist church in 1916 because the same year he had started a new congregation with another ecclesiastical structure than the one predicted in the *Discipline* and usual for the Methodist Church.⁵⁵ The leading Pentecostal congregation in Scandinavia, Philadelphia Oslo, had open membership for infant baptized and confession baptized due to the teaching of Barratt.⁵⁶ Barratt had a direct and strong influence on the Swedish Baptist pastor Lewi Petrus (1884-1974), who became one of the most influential Pentecost leaders in Europe. Petrus was excluded from the Baptist Church in Sweden 1913 because he had offered the Communion to adult people who were not members of a Baptist Congregation.⁵⁷ The Swedish Pentecost leader Sven Lidman (1882-1960) followed Barratt on the position that infant baptism and confessing baptism were equal when it came to membership of the congregation. The two praxes of water baptism were signs and symbols of the more important spiritual baptism. The first Pentecostal groups were formed in cities where either Methodist, Baptist or Mission Covenant congregations were influenced by the theology of the Second Great Awakening and the following Holiness Theology. In several Methodist Churches in Continental Europe, we find the discussion about the Pentecostal movement up to the 1920s, where several Methodists have the understanding that Pentecostalism is the same as the Holiness Movement, or Wesley's understanding of The Second Blessing or Christian Perfection. Many Methodists did not see Pentecostalism as a violation of any Methodist doctrines, but a change of Church order,

⁵⁵ Barratt, 1941, p. 208

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 203–211

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 202

a shift from the *Discipline* regulated church to the free and impulsive order of the Holy Spirit. First in the late 1920s, the Methodists in Europe fully understood that Pentecostalism led to church splitting in the Methodist Church.⁵⁸

Theophil Spörri (1887-1955) was a native of Switzerland, and with a number of pamphlets, especially *Der Mensch und die frohe Botschaft* (1939), he influenced European Methodist theology.

Vilém Schneeberger (1928-2006) was a superintendent and teacher at the Methodist seminary in Frankfurt. Schneeberger *Theologische Wurzeln des sozialen Akzents bei John Wesley* (1972) sees Wesley's theology as the source of his social ethics. Coming from the mainline of the Reformation, Wesley grafted Catholic piety onto this root. For Wesley, therefore, theological proclamation and social responsibility formed an indivisible whole; his theology was always concrete as salvation becomes inclusive of personal and social dimensions. Consistently, Schneeberger emphasizes that faith and love stand in direct relation to God and neighbour; faith and life constitute a unity.

Revd. Manfred Marquardt (born 1940), dean of the United Methodist Seminary in Reutlingen between 1989 and 2001, wrote *Praxis und Prinzipien der Sozialethik John Wesleys* (1977). The book focuses on the social ethics from Wesley's participation in attempts to alleviate social ills and economic deprivation; hence Marquardt explores the spheres of Wesley's social activity from his time at Oxford. As a result, Marquardt argues that Wesley's theology developed in dialectical relation to his work with those in poverty and in prison, and through his concern with slavery. Preventive and renewing grace are refracted through and serve these social needs. Acknowledging weaknesses in Wesley's social ethics – his conservative understanding of the state and his failure to acknowledge the necessity of basic structural change in society – Marquardt believes that there is great strength in the positive relation that Wesley held between practice and theory, faith and works, love and reason, and individuals and community.

Manfred Marquardt is the European scholar who, during many years, has written and published most key lecture articles to the Oxford Institute of Methodist Studies.

⁵⁸ Thaarup, 2005, „Der Methodismus und die Pfingstbewegung in Dänemark“

Revd. Walter Klaiber (born 1940), dean of the United Methodist Seminary in Reutlingen between 1977 and 1989, is a New Testament scholar who first was a teacher at the Methodist Seminary in Reutlingen and in 1989 was elected bishop of the United Methodist Church. Klaiber contributed with a number of biblical studies and commentaries. His *Ruf und Antwort: Biblische Grundlagen einer Theologie der Evangelisation* 1990, is characteristic for Klaiber: focus on pastoral theology and praxis, and with a strong biblical foundation. *Ruf und Antwort* was published in English *Call & Response* (1997).

Marquardt and Klaiber worked together at the Methodist Seminary in Reutlingen, and as a result of research in Wesleyan theology and the teaching, they published in 1993 the first post-modern United Methodist systematic Theology *Gelebte Gnade: Grundriss einer Theologie der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche*. This substantial theology represents both a classic Protestant European structure and a neo-Wesleyan perspective, and the book has been a standard source in pastoral training in Europe. After 2001 it is available in English.

In the Scandinavian speaking areas Revd. Odd Hagen (1905-1970) was the first one to write a whole systematic theology *Vår Kristne Tro* (1953). Hagen was dean at the Methodist Seminary, Överås, in Gothenburg, between 1947 and 1953, and then he was elected bishop. Hagen wrote a number of booklets on pastoral theology for lay theologians. He was influenced by the Lutheran Lund theologians but had a strong Wesleyan reference in his writings, e.g., *Kyrka och Sakrament* (1944) and *Kyrkans Ämbete* (1960).

Laura Petri (1879-1959) was a Salvation Army officer, and she wrote a number of biographies of Christian leaders, one of them was *John Wesley* (1928). Petri is dependent on several British research works on the History of Wesley, but she is one of the first non-British scholars who studied some of the original Wesley manuscripts she found at British Museum in London and at Bodleian Library in Oxford. Other historians have written on Wesley and Methodism in Scandinavian language, e.g., Emil Nielsen (1870-1936) *John Wesley's liv og virke* (1933), Yngvar Haddal (1915-1995) *Vær fra vest* (1977) og *Med tusen tengers lyd, Charles Wesley mannen og verket* (1980), but none of these are at an academic level.

Harald Lindström (1905-1997) was the first European to write a focused systematic study on the very core theme of John Wesley's theology on salvation. Lindström was inspired by the Lunda theologians Aulén *Den kristna försoningstanken* (1930), and Nygren *Den kristna kärlekstanken, Eros och Agape* (1936), and even more by Lindroth *Försoningen* (1935), who recapitulated the long Swedish Lutheran discussion on the understanding of atonement and reconciliation. Lindström's *Wesley & Sanctification* (1946), became a classic interpretation of Wesley's understanding of salvation, and with a strong focus on grace as the divine power. Lindström's book has been translated into several European languages.⁵⁹

The Lunda theology has clearly influenced on the Cuban Methodist historian Justo L. González' (born 1927) development of his recognized typological instrument of ecumenical theology in his *Christian Thought Revisited, Three Types of Theology* (1989).⁶⁰

In the same period, Lindström in Sweden worked on his studies of *Wesley & Sanctification*, the Swiss Methodist scholar David Lerch worked on his *Heil und Heiligung bei John Wesley* (1941). Bishop Nuelsen in Zürich and Professor Emil Brunner in Tübingen inspired David Lerch in his German scholarly presentation of the Wesleyan theology on Sanctification in relation to Wesley's Calvinistic controversies in 1763-1770.

The theme of sanctification, Revd. Julie Lunn (born 19??) developed further in her *The Theology and Resignation in Charles Wesley's Hymns* (2016)

In the area of Pastoral Theology, we find a number of interesting writings in Scandinavian languages. The Wesleyan anthropology and the theology on *Prevenient Grace* are behind these writings, and especially significant in the dominant Lutheran context of Northern Europe.

Göte Bergsten (1896-1954) was a comprehensive personality. He was the first non-Roman-Catholic to start the retreat movement in Scandinavia. His book *Bön och meditation* (1939) quotes many of the same sources John Wesley used as *Lectio Divina*

⁵⁹ English: Acta Uppsala 1946, UK Epworth Press 1956, USA Asbury Press 1996. Danish: 1955, 1977. German: 1961, 1982. Korean: 1962. Lithuanian: 2007

⁶⁰ González, 1989, p. 151, 152, 166, 167, 169, 175

readings for spiritual development, and it was a main instrument for the new protestant focus on spiritual formation. Bergsten's most famous work was his initiative to create an organization for pastoral care and counselling, the *Sankt Lukasstiftelsen*. His writing *Psykologien och Själens Vård* (1945) is his most influential publication. Bergsten was a member of C.G. Jung Society that inspired "*The Guild of Pastoral Psychology*" in London.⁶¹

Revd. Bergsten himself was influenced by E. Stanley Jones (1884-1973) who was known for several translations of his books into Scandinavian languages. He is surely the most published Methodist theologian in all Scandinavian languages ever. Jones was known for his Ashram movement, a retreat form Bergsten could use. And Jones was known for his spiritual writings with his humanistic psychological anthropology. Bergsten was very similar in his writings. Scandinavian theologians found support for their understanding of anthropology and the doctrine of sanctification in Pastoral care when James W. Fowler (1940-2015) from Emory University came with his influential study *Stages of Faith. The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (1981).

E. Stanley Jones was a missionary in India from 1907, and he is one of the theologians who have radically changed missiology away from "The White Man's Burden," and away from the understanding that Christianity only exists in the form of Western Euro-American culture and political structures. Jones distilled Christianity out of his own American impact and planted it in the Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim Indian culture. He was critical to the Western imperialistic and private capitalistic system and found many Christian values in the socialistic ideology. Stanley Jones was a personal friend to Mahatma Gandhi and became one of his advisors. Jones' focus on personal development and holiness, his proclamation of Christianity as an instrument to transform individuals was well balanced to his proclamation that Christianity also transforms social structures and political system, and even church structures. Stanley Jones was elected bishop of the Methodist Church in 1928, but he withdrew two days after, before his was consecrated. Jones was nominated to the Nobel Peace Award in 1962 because of his role in the Indian

⁶¹ Brattemo, 1996, p. 15

peace process, and he received the Gandhi Peace Award in 1963 for the same. Stanley Jones travelled a lot in Europe and gave speeches in many different contexts, mostly in the Christian Student Movements between the two World Wars, and in the YMCA and Evangelical Alliance network up to 1971, two years before his death. In most European countries, the Ashram retreat movement developed after the ideas of Stanley Jones, and quite often he visited the Ashrams in Europe. Because the Ashram retreat was developed in a spirit of inter faith dialogue, the Ashram retreat became a popular retreat in the Western secular and post-Christian culture. E. Stanley Jones' authorship is huge, and many of his books were translated into several of the European languages. In many European countries where English is not the first language, Stanley Jones is the one Methodist theologian who is published the most, even more than John Wesley, and many different Protestant churches are influenced by Jones. Since 2009 The Methodist Seminary in Moscow holds a professorship in the theology of E. Stanley Jones.

Odd Hagen was inspired by Bergsten and the field of Psychology of Religion, and he did his licentiate Theology degree at Gothenburg university (1942) in that field, but turned to theology of doctrine in his teaching. Anker E. Nielsen (1904-1986) had the same double focus on his studies. Nielsen wrote several booklets in pastoral and doctrinal themes, and he created a good pedagogic model for the Wesleyan understanding of the *Ordo Salutis* theology. Nielsen was inspired by Carl Rogers' (1902-1987) client centered humanistic psychology, and by Harald Lindström's presentation of Wesley's theology on prevenient grace.

In the field of pastoral care and advice, two more Scandinavian names shall be mentioned. The first is Curt Åmark (1910-2002), who was a director in the Swedish Sankt Lukasstiftelsen. His book *Individ, Personlighet och Medmänsklig Miljö* (1968) continued and developed the work Bergsten started. The second is Revd. David Kvebæk (1933-2013) who worked at the *Modum Bad Nervesanatorium* in Norway, he wrote several books in the field of family therapy. Kvebæk developed *The Kvebaek Family Sculpture Technique: a diagnostic and research tool in family therapy* (1980), and his overall ideas are collected in *Det myndiggjorte mennesket* (1990).

Revd. Thorvald Källstad (1918-1989) was dean at the Methodist Seminary, Överås, in Gothenburg, between 1963 and 1976, and then he became professor in Psychology of Religion at Uppsala University. Källstad wrote several booklets in doctrinal themes, e.g., *Den goda grunden* (1988), a presentation of the Wesleyan Quadrilateral in Scandinavian context. His academic study was *John Wesley and the Bible, a Psychological Study* (1974). Källstad is the first scholar to use Hjalmar Sundén's (1908-1993) Psychological Role Model on a historical person, John Wesley, and the story of Wesley Källstad took from Frank Baker's description of Wesley.

Before he was elected bishop, Ole E. Borgen (1925-2009) wrote a study of *John Wesley on the Sacraments* (1972), a study in Wesley's writings only. His brother Peder Borgen (born 1928) was a New Testament scholar at the university of Trondheim. His main studies were on the fourth Gospel, and several books came out of his hands, e.g.: *Bread from Heaven. An exegetical study of the concept of manna in the gospel of John and the writings of Philo* (1964). Ole E. Borgen collected during his whole lifetime a huge collection of Wesleyan publications, truly the largest private collected Wesleyan library in Europe. This collection has been expanded further by donations of books from Peder Borgen. Under the name *The Borgen Collection*, this theological library is hosted by the UMC Theological Seminary in Oslo.

Two Scandinavian Scholars who contributed to the academic studies in America are to be mentioned. The first is Thor Hall (1927-2017) who wrote several studies on the Lundensian theology, e.g. *A Framework for Faith, Lundensian Theological Methodology* (1979). The second is Arne Hassing (born 194?) who wrote with focus on Sociology of Religion the *Religion and Power. The Case of Methodism in Norway* (1980).

From German Methodism, Jorg Rieger (born 1963), is a Wesleyan scholar at the Vanderbilt University, Nashville.

Revd. Tore Meistad (1942-2000) was dean at the United Methodist Seminary in Bergen. His Wesley-studies started with a comparing analysis of Luther's and Wesley's interpretation of the ethic of the Lord's sermon on the Mount *To be a Christian in the World: Martin Luther's and John Wesley's Interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount* (1989). Then he contributed with a

number of articles and books lifting the international neo-Wesleyan theology into a Scandinavian context, e.g., *John Wesley's Theology of Salvation as a Model for Social Change* (1992). In 1992 Meistad published a full Systematic Theology in *Frelsens Veg. Teologi og etikk i wesleyansk tradisjon*.

Revd. Tord Ireblad (born 1939) was dean at the United Methodist Seminary, Överås, in Gothenburg, between 1985 and 2001. He contributed with several New Testament exegetical works. His licentiate dissertation was on *The disciple Jesus Loved* in the Gospel of John (1999).

In Europe as a whole some congregations were growing, and some congregations declined. The overall view is that protestant Christianity in Europe has been in crisis during many decades. One reason is the secularisation and the change of values in society. Another reason is the fact that the last two World Wars started and were fought where protestant and evangelical Christianity were the strongest. Several other reasons could be mentioned: post-Christian culture, invasion of World Religions, individual self-realization as the main purpose for life. John Scott Lidgett's theology was addressed to this new situation. The so-called secular theology or the "God is Dead" theology like Dietrich Bonhöffer (1906-1945), Paul Tillich (1886-1965) and Jürgen Moltmann (born 1926) have addressed this context of Christianity. In 1966, Epworth Press published the Swedish-American scholar Nels F. S. Ferré (1908-1971) *The Living God of Nowhere and Nothing* as a modern contribution into the post-Christian world. And in 1998 the Theological Commission of the European Methodist Council published the study document *Christ Before Us*, which was translated into several European languages. This study document was a common theological Wesleyan voice to the Churches at the turn of the century.

The most Methodist and Wesleyan churches in Europe have published their own hymn books, liturgy books and catechism books. These resources for church life in worship and sacraments also represent a theological Wesleyan tradition and identity. The reason for so many original publications are the numbers of different languages in Europe and the need for having authorised presentations of the life of the church in every single country or area of language in Europe. In each Methodist and Wesleyan

church in Europe, where own hymnals, liturgy books and catechism books are published during several decades, we find an independent and original Wesleyan tradition and development that have been the major influence on most people's understanding of what Methodism and Wesleyanism are.

Churches, who have own hymn books, have several translated hymnals of the Wesley brothers and other international well-known Methodist poets like James Montgomery (1771-1854), Fanny Crosby (1820-1915) and Carl Boberg (1859-1940). But in addition to this international tradition of hymnals, each country has several local hymn poets in the Wesleyan tradition, and an even larger numbers of hymn poets from other ecumenical churches in the same country. This singing theological development represents a local Wesleyan tradition of great importance.

Churches, who have own liturgy books, show a development where Methodist and Wesleyan worship life is shaped by the ecumenical context. The majority church in the specific country has influenced the Methodist and Wesleyan development of worship. In Lutheran dominated countries, we find the Methodist praxis of collective absolution and a much more orthodox praxis of baptism than what is common in American Methodism. In Roman Catholic dominated countries, we find many elements of praxis in the Methodist and Wesleyan worshipping that add distance to the Roman Catholic praxis. In Orthodox dominated countries, we find use of icons, symbols, and more sacramental understanding in the Methodist and Wesleyan churches. And Methodism on the British Isles have a stronger interactive relation to the Anglican Church around worship and liturgy. This liturgical development represents a local Wesleyan tradition of great importance.

In some European countries, the Methodist and Wesleyan Churches have the authority to act as the civil authority in name giving, civil registration of citizenship of the country and in performing marriages with legal status in the country, and the ordained pastors are acting as civil authorities *and* as authorities of the church in the acts of baptism and marriage. In other European countries, the acts of the church have no civil or legal status, and the act of baptism is limited to the religious importance, and the act of marriage is limited to an act of blessing and celebration of what the civil authorities have already legally performed. These differences in the status of the acts of the church in the different

countries, of course influence the development of the liturgies for baptism and marriage, and the theology of the same.

Churches, who have own books of catechism, used for teaching in confirmation classes, Sunday school classes and small group sessions, also show a theological contextual development both with adaptations of theology from other protestant denominations and with elements of adding distance to the majority cultural Christianity of the country. This development of catechism represents a local Wesleyan tradition of great importance.

One of the studies in Wesleyan liturgy and tradition of Worship in Europe is John Bishop (?) *Methodist Worship in Relation to Free Church Worship* (1950), published by Epworth Press.

In the area of practical theology, the Dean of Reutlingen Theological Seminary, Revd. Dr. Holger Eschmann (born 1957) published his *Predigen Lernen. Ein Lehrbuch für die Praxis* in 2001, a text book for pastoral teaching translated into English and Bulgarian in 2004, into Korean in 2014 and into Russian in 2015.

New voices

By Jørgen Thaarup

The neo-Wesleyan period of History of Theology started in 1984. It was the 200 years celebration of Wesley's initiative to organize the Episcopal Methodist Church in America. The celebration included an intensive focus on Wesleyan Theology Today. A theological consultation took place at Drew University where many theologians from several Methodist denominations in America presented the status of Wesleyan Theology of today. After the consultation, Theodore Runyon (1930-2017) edited and published the great volume: *Wesleyan Theology Today. A Bicentennial Theological Consultation* (1985). This consultation and publications influenced a new development and interest in Wesleyan Theology. Theodore Runyon's own contribution into this process is mostly collected in his *The New Creation. John Wesley's Theology Today* (1998), a book used as introduction to Wesleyan theology in many pastoral training programs.

The second event to initiate the neo-Wesleyan period was the beginning of the editorial collection with the first critical and scholarly edition of the Works of John Wesley. Many years before, Jackson, Curnock and Telford had edited collections of Wesley's Works, but none of them were critical or scientific or sufficient for modern academic research. Oxford Press started a new project with the first volume in 1975, and in 1984 the Abingdon Press took over the project with the next volumes, beginning with Wesley's Sermons. This was the start of the project, called *The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley*. In 2022, 23 volumes are completed, 36 volumes are planned. This new publication of some of Wesley's writings have inspired many theologians to study the theology of Wesley in new perspectives and contexts.

The third initiative to inspire the neo-Wesleyan period is *the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies*. The Institute started in 1958 as a conference for Wesleyan scholars from the US and UK. The two Methodist ministers Reginald Kissack (1910-1998) from the UK and Dow Kirkpatrick (1917-2004) from the USA were the key initiators behind the first study conference in 1958. Since then, the Institute has grown to have attendance from global methodism and many Wesleyan denominations. Each Institute gathers scholars during two weeks at the historical place of Methodism in Oxford, UK. Five hard copy books have been printed with key papers from five different Institutes: Dow Kirkpatrick Edit. *The Doctrine of the church* (1964); M. Douglas Meeks (born 19??) edited *The Future of The Methodist Theological Traditions* (1985); M. Douglas Meeks edited *What Should Methodists Teach? Wesleyan Tradition and Modern Diversity* (1990); Randy L. Maddox edited *Rethinking Wesley's Theology* (1998); and M. Douglas Meeks edited *Wesleyan Perspectives on the New Creation* (2004). All five books include several contributions from European Wesleyan scholars, e.g., C.K. Barrett, E. Gordon Rupp, Geoffrey Wainwright, David Lowes Watson, Brian E. Beck and Manfred Marquardt. From 2002 to 2007 more than 200 scholars contributed with research papers, presentations and study results every fifth year when the Institute is in sessions. All study papers from each Institute have been published; now all papers are collected and available on the Oxford Institute webpage: <https://oxford-institute.org>. This

webpage is one of the main resources for modern and global Methodist Theology. In 2004, one of the European key leaders of the Oxford Institute, Revd. Brian E. Beck (born 1933), wrote the book *Exploring Methodism's Heritage: The Story of the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies*. Brian E. Beck was in the leadership of the Oxford Institute from 1969 to 2007, and he has written and published a number of key lecture articles. Another important book written by Brian E. Beck is his *Methodist Heritage and Identity* (2018).

The neo-Wesley period was prepared for by a number of American Methodist Theologians, e.g., Albert Outler (1908-1989), Franz Hildebrandt (1909-1985), Robert Cushman (born 1923) and Thomas Langford (1930-2000). Also, Randy Maddox (born 1953) *Responsible Grace* (1994) and Richard P. Heitzenrater (born 1939) *Wesley and the People Called Methodists* (1995), published in several European languages, and British Henry D. Rack (born 1931) *Reasonable Enthusiast, John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism* (2001) have prepared many students for new studies in Wesleyan thinking and praxis.

In his research in original Wesley manuscripts, Richard P. Heitzenrater studied frequently at the John Rylands Library at Manchester University, the place in England where most original Wesley manuscripts are collected, and also the place of the archives of the Methodist Church in Great Britain. Wesley's Diaries were well known among scholars in the period immediately after Wesley, and we can see in the studies of Laura Petri that she could read Wesley's code-language. But in modern time, the knowledge of understanding the symbols, abbreviations, mix of alphabets and code language in Wesley's private notes were lost. Heitzenrater was the scholar in modern time who "broke the code," and in his *The Elusive Mr. Wesley Volume One and Two* (1984) he gives his presentation of the work with the original Wesley manuscripts, and in *The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley* we now find, for the first time ever, Wesley's Diary uploaded and published in English language. The Bridwell Library of Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University, Texas, holds the largest collection of original Wesley manuscripts in America. Under the leadership of Richard P. Heitzenrater the Bridwell Library was in 1999 the place for an international theological consultation on the theme

of Wesleyan social ethics. A number of the contributions to this consultation, Richard P. Heitzenrater has edited and published in *The Poor and the People Called Methodists* (2002).

In the fields of Charles Wesley biographies Gary Best's volume *Charles Wesley. A biography* from 2006 has been the standard resource, published by Epworth Press.

The modern British patristic scholar Frances Young (born 1939) has focused on the Christian heritage we find in the writings of the Greek church Fathers. One dimension in the neo-Wesleyan theology is Wesley's dependency of the church Fathers. Particular *God's Presence: A Contemporary Recapitulation of Early Christianity* (2013) has been influential.

The first universities were established in Europe. Several of them are more than 500 years old. When it comes to theology, the universities have been the most important place for education and research in theology. Especially after the time of reformation, where theology was strictly linked to studies of the biblical scripture, the universities have developed the monopoly on theological education. The European history of wars of religion and reformations, and the territorial division of the Christian confessions have resulted in very strict control of what kind of theology, and especially doctrines, the local university could accept. For the small churches and migration-based churches, it was a great challenge because the state universities did not open for students with a non-majority church education background. Many Methodist churches in Europe have their own seminaries for pastoral training, or their own educational systems, but none of these are accredited at the state-universities, not because of the academic level, but because of the content of the educations and the curriculum, where the majority denomination of the country or area defined the accepted standards. In the history of Wesleyan theology in Europe, it is only in the generation of British Methodist New Testament scholars in the middle of the twentieth century where you find a representative number of Methodist theologians in positions at the universities in Europe. In praxis many Methodist theologians with a basic theological education from a Methodist seminary in Europe had the experience that they did not have any chance to enter education at a research level, or third round education. If your interest and specialty was in doctrinal studies or Wesleyan studies, the chances were even smaller.

Maybe that is one of the reasons why so few Methodist Theologians found their way to the *Oxford Institute*?

It has also been a development within European theology at the universities that the discipline of theology has moved away from confessional and classic doctrinal theology and towards a discipline of Science of Religion or Humanity. The development has moved away from what the church needs in pastoral training, and closer to what is common humanistic science and scientific research in the human phenomenon of religion, and the business of the organization of church. The seminaries related to church have adapted a lot of the development from the university Theology for the reason to get official accreditation and recognition of degrees. But the same development has influenced the curriculum of the theological education and work of research. It is no longer evident that the work of theology needed in the church is done in the framework of our Institutions of Education.

The *Community of Protestant Churches in Europe* (CPCE) has highlighted the challenges of theological training for pastoral ministry in the protestant churches in Europe in the study document: *Ministry, ordination, episkopé and the theological education* (2013).

The Wesleyan institutions of education in England and Ireland, and the Reutlingen School of Theology were accredited as institution in 2005, and their degrees in 2008, and after 2010 the University College Stockholm, and the Methodist line at the Lutheran theological institution in Oslo have got the full recognition and accreditation to offer fully accepted degrees in higher education in theology.

The network-organization *United Methodist Theological Schools in Europe* (UMTSE) was started in 1989, first with participation of the three seminaries in Gothenburg, Reutlingen and Bergen. But soon also with participation from the seminary in Warsaw, the pastoral program in Bratislava, in Lausanne and in Tallinn. The breakdown of the Iron Curtain in Europe motivated development of the UMTSE work with connection to new seminaries and pastoral training programs, e.g., in Moscow, and when the UMC GBHEM (General Board on Higher Education and Ministry of the UMC) became a faithful partner in the European UMTSE the connection was made to the similar *American United Methodist Theological Schools* (AUMTS).

The UMC seminary in Bergen/Norway (Dean Tore Meistad) and Wesley seminary in Washington DC (registrar Prof. Ellis Larsen) started a joint DMin program in 1986, the first Doctor of Ministry program where theologians graduated from a continental European Methodist Seminary could join a research level graduation program. This joint program was taken over by the UMTSE, and three tracks, in 1988-90, in 1994-98, and in 2008-12, of this program have led to 12 Methodist pastors with a DMin degree. In 1999 Asbury Seminary in Kentucky offered the same DMin program to European pastors, and 5 DMin degrees were earned by Europeans. All these studies are in pastoral theology, and the perspective for all of them are more or less within what we call neo-Wesleyanism. Some of the completed DMin studies in 1991 are: Roar G. Fotland (born 1955), Pär Axel Sahlberg (born 1954) *Doing Theology in Small Groups: A Swedish Approach to Latin American Base groups* and Armin Bessarer (born 195?); in 1998: Thomas Lessman (born 196?), Helmut Renders (born 1961), and Jørgen Thaarup (born 1957) *Methodism with a Danish Face*; in 1999: Peter Svanberg (born 1960) *Church planting & leadership*; in 2000: Üllas Tankler (born 1959) *Building culturally relevant bridges for the gospel between the local church and the world at its door*; in 2002: Christian Alsted (born 1961) *Worship Change to Reach Non-Christians in Traditional Danish Evangelical Free Churches*; in 2012: Thomas Risager (born 1969) *Sing Unto The Lord*, Ingrid Svensson (born 1964) *The pastor as a Servant Leader in the Joint Future*, Elisabeth Öman (born 1967) and Werner Philipp (born 1967); in 2013: Meeli Tankler (born 1956) *Harmonizing individual and ecclesiastical expectations with the institution of theological education*. For the future, the opportunities to do the cross Atlantic programs are difficult for several reasons.

The Wesley House in Cambridge, in co-operation with the Cambridge University, offers a DMin program open for attendance of international students. Wesley House offers the opportunities for visiting scholars to spend time in Cambridge and use the many resources this historic place offers.

In the UK, Cliff College and Nazarene Theological College, offers doctoral programs in cooperation with local universities. The political UK Brexit from the EU in 2020 has changed the

opportunities for international EU students to study in England because England is not part of the Erasmus program any longer.

The Manchester Wesley Research Centre promote scholarship in the Wesleyan tradition, e.g., the *Methodist Studies Seminars* which meet biannually and are a partnership of several Methodist-related institutions. The MWRC also offers *Visiting Research Fellowship, Postdoctoral Fellowship, and Sabbatical Fellowship*.

In 2010 the UMTSE was changed to a new net-work organization when the *Methodist-related Theological Schools in Europe* (MTSE) was founded, now with seminaries and theological high schools from the Methodist traditions represented by the nine Wesleyan, Methodist and united churches who are included in the *European Methodist Council* (EMC). In 2021 the MTSE has 18 member-institutions and are connected to the *International Association of Methodist Schools, Colleges, and Universities* (IAMSCU).

From the 1990s, the two new United Methodist theological institutions in Tallinn and Moscow have strongly been supported by Asbury Theological Seminary in Kentucky, and over time several theologians from Asbury have given lectures in Tallinn and Moscow. Kenneth Collins' (born 1952) presentation of Wesleyan theology *The Scripture Way of Salvation* (1997) has been translated into Russian language (20??) and Estonian language (2019), and this book has influenced two decades of pastors' training in the Baltic and Eurasia Methodist churches.

Books of Methodist history have been published since the start of each European Methodist denomination. Most books are written in the context of each nation or language area. A number of biographies of Methodist pioneers in Europe are known from each nation or language, e.g., biographies of Victor Witting (1902), OP Petersen, Karl Hurtig (1972) and Chr. Willerup (1981). This divided Methodist history has caused that the Methodist identity is divided too. Each story about the small Methodist church in the small country has contributed to the identity of the specific version of methodism in that country.

New resources in Methodist History are the numbers of jubilee publications from local congregations, Methodist institutions and Methodist mission in a European country or foreign mission. These resources have not been included in this presentation. And

a common European Methodist identity has waited for a common Methodist history, not only for the continent, but for all of Europe. Bishop Paul Neff Garber (1899-1972) wrote his contributions to a European Methodist history in 1949, *The Methodists of Continental Europe*. Garber continued his research, but died during his work, and Bishop Roy Hunter Short (1902-1994) took up the material from Garber and completed it in *History of Methodism in Europe* (1980). However, we have neither one history of all the Methodist movements in Europe nor a history where British and American Methodism in Europe are united. In 2003, Patrick Ph. Streiff (born 1955) published his *Der Methodismus in Europa im 19. Und 20. Jahrhundert*, in 2005 the English version came out, *Methodism in Europe: 19th and 20th century*. In his dissertation in Methodist History, Streiff had written on John Fletcher, but in the history book on Methodism in all of Europe, the different Methodist denominations and traditions, and the different language areas are combined in one and the same history. This kind of Methodist history is unique, not only in Europe.

In Germany Revd. Karl Heinz Voigt (born 1934) has written a number of extensive books on Methodist history broadly conceived in German speaking Europe, and Ulrike Schuler (born 1956) and Docent Michel Weyer (born 1937) have written a number of historical articles over research work and published mostly by the periodical of *Studiengemeinschaft für Geschichte der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche*. In Finland Revd. Leif-Göte Björklund (born 1960) wrote in 2005 the dissertation *Rikssvenska metodistpredikanterns betydelse för metodistkyrkans framväxt och utveckling i Finland 1880-1923*, on the history of the Methodist Lay preachers when Methodism was established in Finland and Russia, Sct. Petersburg area.

In 1995 S.T. Kimbrough, jr. (born 1936) wrote, edited, and published *Methodism in Russia & the Baltic States, History and Renewal*. In this volume we find the history of Methodism before the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, and before the World War II in the Baltics. And we find the restart of Methodism in the post-soviet time in the same countries.

Research Fellow at the *Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History*, Peter S. Forsaith (born 19??) wrote in 2008 *The Letters of The Revd John Fletcher of Madeley to Leaders in the Evangelical Revival*.

In the field of mission and inculturation four dissertations must be mentioned. Roar G. Fotland (born 1955) was dean of the Methodist Theological Seminar in Bergen, he wrote *Ancestor Christology in Context* (2005), an analysis of the Ghanaian theologian Kwame Bediako's description of Christ in an African and none-Western context. Michael Nausner (born 1965), professor in systematic theology at the Reutlingen School of Theology, wrote a dissertation on *Subjects In-Between. A Theological Boundary Hermeneutics* (2005). From Nausner we have a number of articles on the issue of theology of the boundaries: *Kulturelle Grenzerfahrung und die methodistische Konnexio* (2010), *Methodism's Migratory DNA as Resource for a Global Theology* (2015), *Changing Identities, Changing Narratives: Can Theology Contribute to a New Cultural Imagination of Migration?* (2017), and *Eine Theologie der Teilhabe* (2020). Sergei Nikolaev (born 1972), dean of the UMC Seminary in Moscow 2008-present, wrote *Church and Reunion in the Theologies of Sergii Bulgakov and Georges Florovsky, 1918-1940* (2007). Mark Lewis (born 1958) teacher at the Methodist e-Academy in Methodist ecclesiology and praxis, wrote *the diffusion of Black Gospel music in postmodern Denmark* (2008), an analysis of American Black Gospel used for evangelization and building up Christian identity in Denmark. In Orthodox Bulgaria Daniel Topalski (born 1974) wrote a presentation of Wesleyan teaching on sanctification in relation to orthodox theology: *The Outlook of Wesley Brothers on Sanctification and Christian Perfection* (2017).

Revd. Kenneth Wilson (1937-2017) contributed in 2011 with *Methodist Theology*, a systematic theological presentation.

In 2005 Revd. Angela A. Shier-Jones (1960-2011) published her *A Work in Progress: Methodists Doing Theology*.

Thomas Noble (born 194?) from Scotland contributed to Wesleyan thinking during his teaching at the Nazarene College in Manchester. His important work *Holy Trinity. Holy People. The Theology of Christian Perfection* was published in 2013.

Revd. Kent Brower (born 195?) as a New Testament scholar from the Nazarene College in Manchester has written a number of pieces on holiness from a New Testament perspective. His books *Holiness and Ecclesiology in the New Testament* (2007) and *Living as God's Holy People: Holiness and Community in*

Paul (2010), have become important works in the theology of Christian holiness.

Revd. Geordan Hammond (born 1978) has promoted research in the Wesleyan tradition through his roles as Director of the Manchester Wesley Research Centre and Vice President of MTSE. He is a scholar of Wesleyan studies and church history at Nazarene Theological College in Manchester. His publications include *Religion, Gender, and Industry: Exploring Church and Methodism in a Local Setting* (2011), edited with Peter Forsaith; *John Wesley in America: Restoring Primitive Christianity* (2014); *George Whitefield: Life, Context, and Legacy* (2016), edited with David Ceri Jones. He is co-editor of the journal *Wesley and Methodist Studies* and the book series *Studies in the Holiness and Pentecostal Movements*.

Revd. Jørgen Thaarup (born 1957) was dean at the United Methodist Theological Seminary, Överås in Gothenburg between 2001 and 2011, wrote a systematic and doctrinal study in *Kristendommens Morgenstjerne* (2015) and a post-doctoral study in *Med venner i lys vi tale. John Wesleys og NFS Grundtvigs konvergerende teologier* (2016). These studies are inspired by the Lundensian theology and the typology developed by Justo L. Gonzáles (born 1937) in his *Christian Thought Revisited* (1989). Thaarup presents the convergence theology of Wesley and Grundtvig in the perspective of their use of the Greek Eastern Church Fathers in their thinking.

David Field (born 1963) analyzed Wesley's sermons in *Bid Our Jarring Conflicts Cease: A Wesleyan Theology and Praxis of Church Unity* (2019) to lift up prevenient grace and the agape to hold the church together in spite of splitting and separation.

In the context of Roman Catholic and Protestant conflicts in Ireland, Revd. Johnston McMaster (born 194?) has published excellent studies. Johnston McMaster was the Co-Ordinator of the Education for Reconciliation at Irish School of Ecumenics in Belfast. In 1994 he published *Churches Working Together*, in 2008 he published *A Passion For Justice: Social Ethics In The Celtic Tradition*, in 2014 he published *Overcoming Violence*, in 2020 he published *Is There Life After Covid-19? The Search For Meaning And Moral Values*, and in 2021 he published *Let Justice Well Up Like Water: Right Relation Rooted in Justice*.

Revd. Hilde Marie Ø. Movafagh (born 1974) is the dean of the Methodist Highschool of Christendom in Norway. She published her dissertation *Broadening the Perspectives: Prevenient Grace in Contemporary Methodist Theology* (2021), a study in new and fresh expressions of Wesleyan Theology for today.

The Methodist lay preacher and professor in Christian doctrine at Aberdeen university, Tom Greggs, is one of the few contemporary European dogmatic theologians. Particular his *Dogmatic Ecclesiology Vol 1: The Priestly Catholicity of the Church* (2019) and his *The Breadth of Salvation: Rediscovering the Fullness of God's Saving Work* (2020) have to be recognized.

In several countries and during different periods we find Methodist and Wesleyan periodicals for studies in Theology and History. Mostly these periodicals have published translations of articles and sermons from English into other European languages, but also some few examples of articles on Methodist doctrines on research and developing level. And few periodicals are published for today. There are on-line publications, e.g. The *Theological Forum* on the Norwegian Methodist Homepage: www.metodistkirken.no/hoved/ressurser/teologisk-forum. And the *Oxford Institute Homepage* is a bank of theological articles.

Theologie für die Praxis is an annually published periodical in German with the focus on pastoral theology of the church.

Christoph Klaiber (born 1967) *Von Gottes Geist verändert: Ursprung und Wirkung wesleyanischer Pneumatologie* (2013) is an excellent presentation of Wesley's understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit. Stefan Zürcher-Allenbach (born 1967) from Zürich wrote his dissertation on *Die formative Dimension des Gebets: Pastoraltheologische Grundlegungen einer Gemeindepraxis aus methodistisch-wesleyanischer Perspektive* (2019). And Patrick Streiff's *John Wesley: Theologie in Predigten*, originally published in French is available in English (2021). Revd. Friedemann Burkhardt (born 1961) also published a work in pastoral theology in his *Erneuerung der Kirche: Impulse von Martin Luther und John Wesley für Gemeindeentwicklung* (2019).

The *Studiengemeinschaft für Geschichte der Evangelisch-methodistischen Kirche* is a German ongoing periodical for Methodist history in Europe for many years.

In 2015, the Northern Europe Central Conference of the UMC started the publication of a new periodical for Wesleyan studies *Nordic Perspectives on Methodism*.

In the UK we find three scholarly periodicals. All of them follow the common academic criteria for scientific publication, only first-time publication of studies on research and developing level, and only articles going through the mandatory Peer Review process. The first periodical is from the Wesley Historical Society, which since 1897 has published the *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*. Three annually publications.

Wesley and Methodist Studies, the second UK periodical, was established by the Manchester Wesley Research Centre and Nazarene Theological College in 2009, becoming a partnership with Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History the following year. It biannually publishes peer-reviewed articles in Methodist and Wesleyan studies.

The third UK periodical is the *Methodist Review. A Journal of Wesleyan and Methodist Studies*. ISSN: 1956-5254.

From the theological traditions outside the traditions of the nine member churches of the European Methodist Council, we find several studies in Wesleyan theology in Europe. One example is the Anglican Canon Arthur MacDonald Allchin (1930-2010) who uses Wesley as the primary source to find the Anglican position on the issue of sanctification, an answer into the ecumenical discussion on the doctrine of *theosis* with the similar position as the Finish Lutheran theologian Tuoma Mannermaas (1937-2015) using the *communicatio idiomatum* on the human – divine relation. Allchin's *Participation in God: A Forgotten Strand in Anglican Tradition* (1988) is one of his writings on the Anglican doctrinal position using Wesley as the primary and dominant source.

Another example is the Lutheran professor Revd. Niels Henrik Gregersen (born 1956) at the University of Copenhagen, who wrote an article on the dogmatic teaching of Wesley on the key issue of reformation theology: *John Wesleys opgør med den augustinsk-reformatoriske nådelære* (2006). In this article Gregersen presents Wesley's theology on reconciliation as a European neo-protestant theology, different from the classic protestant theology, and as a genuine theology on reconciliation without dependency of the augustin-lutheran forensic and judicial thinking behind the logic of reconciliation. This article was

a follow-up on the first study of Wesley's teaching on prevenient grace and the human free will in Wesley's thinking, in Gregersen: *Guds frie nåde, troens frie gensvar: Frelsens betingelser hos NFS Grundtvig og John Wesley* (2004).

In the area of political theology, professor Arne Rasmusson from Gothenburg University has published his dissertation *The Church as Polis* (1994), and a number of articles. Rasmusson is inspired by the political theology of Stanley Hauerwas (born 1940) from Duke University, and by Methodist lay preacher Nelson Mandela (1918-2013) from South Africa.

A living tradition

Extracted from Langford: Practical Divinity

Tradition is a stream through history. A stream may have neat clear banks, or it may flow across boundaries and be difficult to trace. Some streams seem to remain pure and carry their original water from source to estuary; others continually acquire new content and become mixtures from many springs. The headwaters of some streams are easy to locate, but others are almost impossible to discover. As with streams, so with traditions.

A historical stream is a tradition insofar as it possesses dominant characteristics and conveys an enduring sense of meaning. Tradition releases an inner pulsation that is felt, known by, and shapes those related to it, even if the basic awareness is not fully explicable. Tradition is organic. Staccato-paced sequential events do not, as such, make a cohesive, persisting movement. Traditions, connections of sense and sensibility, tie the past to the present and point, with tentative possibility, to the future.

The Wesleyan movement is one stream in Christian history, a stream of Christian witness to which John Wesley gave impetus. Its point of origin is clear and its dominant current can be traced rather well. But the stream does not have neat boundaries. It divides and sometimes flows together again; it often takes on the coloration of the different European terrain through which it has passed; it experiences expansion and contraction. But through its many changes there have persisted qualities derived from its original source.

There is a tradition through which the spirit of John Wesley continues. Wesley could not have guessed the issue of his work; and he probably would react with surprise, satisfaction, or chagrin at the resulting currents. But he gave propulsion to a stream that has continued to the present.⁶²

The Wesleyan stream of Christianity grew out of a spirit of revival that preceded the Wesleys and was broader than their influence. But it was in those revivals of eighteenth-century England that the tradition had its origin. John Wesley was the dominant figure. He was a leader and, as though expected by right, he exercised leadership over much of the revival with his assured sense of purpose, extraordinary energy, selfless drive of mission, effective preaching, and care for the whole life of people.

At the founding of City Road Chapel in London on May 21, 1777, Wesley attempted to describe his movement:

You will ask, “What is Methodism? What does this new word mean? Is it not a new religion?” ... Nothing can be more remote from the truth. ... Methodism, so called, is the old religion, the religion of the Bible, the religion of the primitive Church, the religion of the Church of England. This old religion ... is no other than love, the love of God and all mankind.⁶³

Wesley believed that Methodism was a renewed expression of Christian faith. Wesley was indebted to a wide range of Christian history; rooted in Scripture, he read – and recommended for reading – the writings of the church Fathers, both East and West, the Roman Catholic spiritual tradition, the Reformation traditions, and Anglican divines. In this spirit the Wesleyan tradition began. Wesley’s comprehensive, richly textured theology represented an altered perspective, which provided a new frame of reference for theological construction. The centering theme of Wesley’s thought was grace, expressed in Jesus Christ and conveyed to individuals by the Holy Spirit: Christian life is rooted and fulfilled in grace. Wesley explicated this theme – from prevenience to justification, to assurance, to sanctification, to final glorification – and this theology possessed the power to inaugurate and nourish a tradition.

⁶² Langford, 1983, p. 11-12

⁶³ Wesley *Works*, Jackson Ed. Vol 7, p. 423

Wesleyan theology, as it advanced beyond Wesley, has exhibited characteristic qualities of his thought more than it has adhered to distinctive doctrines. Consequently, John Wesley has been a guide to theological reflection more than a definitive doctrinal source. Today the Wesleyan tradition is the result of its inclusive history; it has flourished because it has been vital; it has grown because it has allowed diversity; it has been enhanced by the continual infusion of new streams, both compatible and challenging. Beginning with Wesley, it did not stop with Wesley – this is one important mark of this tradition.⁶⁴

Theological Guidelines: Sources and Criteria

Extracted from UMC Discipline 1988

Wesley believed that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in *Scripture*, illuminated by *tradition*, vivified in personal *experience*, and confirmed by *reason*.

For Wesley, a cogent account of the Christian faith required the use of reason, both to understand Scripture and to relate the biblical message to wider fields of knowledge. He looked for confirmations of the biblical witness in human experience, especially the experience of regeneration and sanctification, but also in the “common sense” knowledge of everyday experience.

The interaction of these sources and criteria in Wesley’s own theology furnishes a guide for our continuing theological task as Methodists. In that task Scripture, as the constitutive witness to the wellsprings of our faith, occupies a place of primary authority among these theological sources.

In practice, theological reflection may also find its point of departure in tradition, experience, or rational analysis. What matters most is that all four guidelines be brought to bear in faithful, serious, theological consideration. Insights arising from serious study of the Scriptures and tradition thought enables us to understand better the Bible and our common Christian history.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Langford, 1983, p. 259-261

⁶⁵ UMC Book of *Discipline* 1988, § 69, p. 80-81

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<https://oimts.files.wordpress.com/2018/11/2018-03-thaarup.pdf>

On-line resources for research

Oxford Institute

<https://oxford-institute.org>

Methodist Review

A Journal of Wesleyan and Methodist studies

<https://methodistreview.org/index.php/mr>

Dictionary of Methodism in Britain and Ireland

<https://dmbi.online>

Methodist Heritage, UK

<http://www.methodistheritage.org.uk>

Manchester Wesley Research Center

<http://www.mwrc.ac.uk>

Wesley Historical Society, UK

<http://www.wesleyhistoricalsociety.org.uk>

Wesleyan-Holiness Digital Library

<https://www.whdl.org>

EMK-studiengemeinschaft

<http://www.emk-studiengemeinschaft.de>

Methodist and Wesleyan related institutions for theology in Europe

Teologiska Högskolan Stockholm

c/o University College Stockholm

<https://www.ehs.se/english>

Metodistkirkens Teologiske Seminar, Oslo

c/o Norwegian School of Theology, Religion and Society

<https://www.mf.no/en>

Baltic Methodist Theological Seminary, Tallinn

<https://www.emkts.ee>

Reutlingen School of Theology, Germany

<https://www.th-reutlingen.de>

The European Nazarene College, Büsingen, Germany

Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, UK

<https://nazarene.ac.uk>

Cliff College, Sheffield, UK

<https://cliffcollege.ac.uk>

The Queen's Foundation, Birmingham, UK

<http://www.queens.ac.uk>

Wesley House Cambridge, UK

<https://www.wesley.cam.ac.uk>

Edgehill Theological College, Belfast, UK

<http://www.edgehillcollege.org>

Wesley Study Centre, St. John's College,

Durham University, UK

William Booth College, London

Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History

Oxford, UK

<http://www.ocmch.wordpress.com>

Centre Méthodiste de Formation Théologique,

Lausanne

<http://www.cmft.ch>

The Methodist e-Academy, Europe

<http://www.methodist-e-academy.org>

Waldensian Faculty, Rome, Italy

<http://www.facoltavaldese.org/it>

United Evangelical School of Theology, Madrid, Spain

Department of Evangelical Theology and Mission,

School of Pedagogy, University of Matej Bel

Banske Bystrica, Slovak Republik

Institute of Church Education, Czech Republic

Russia UMC Theological Seminary, Moscow, Russia

**International Association of Methodist Schools,
Colleges & Universities**

2022

www.iamscu.net

World Methodist Council

The Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies

The Oxford Institute is a fellowship of scholars from the global Methodist and Wesleyan traditions. The Oxford Institute calls for sessions every fifth year in the historical place in Oxford, England. The first Oxford Institute was in 1958, where mostly scholars from American Methodism and British-Irish Methodism participated. The institute has attracted up to 250 scholars, and now from Methodist and Wesleyan churches and universities from all over the world.

Every five years the Oxford Institutes gather for ten days. Each day is divided into some plenary sessions with lectures for all members, and some sessions, where the members work in the specific group for their main interests. Each applying member for an Oxford Institute has to prepare and send out, in beforehand, a study paper or an article or an outline for an ongoing work of academic studies. In the sessions of the groups each member is given the time for presentation of study-work, and another member of the group is given critique and response. The Oxford Institute is what scholars often names as a “call for papers”-conference. This kind of work in the groups is well-known from the academic institutions when work of studies is presented and discussed by fellow scholars on the same level and discipline. The Oxford Institute is known for the very stimulating and developing, friendly and positive discussions of the present research in Wesleyan theology.

One of the former presidents of the Oxford Institute, Professor M. Douglas Meeks, addressed the new members saying: “One of the main purposes for the Oxford Institute is to organize a place where Methodist scholars can make friends. An important part of developing new theology is to make friends.”

The Oxford Institute has indeed been a place and a time where many friendships within Wesleyan theology have been made. The physical framework for the Oxford Institute is the colleges and university facilities in Oxford, where John and Charles Wesley lived for many years, and the first Methodism was formed. In this historical setting the Oxford Institute members

are accommodated, have their daily meals and worship together in the Cathedral where Charles and John Wesley were ordained and had his place. There are plenty of opportunities to meet with all the Methodist scholars you only know from your bookshelf, Methodist scholars not only from your own church, but from the fellowship of all Methodist and Wesleyan related churches and universities in the world.

The applying members for the Oxford Institute must choose participation in one of the working groups:

1. Biblical studies, Hebrew Bible / Old Testament
2. Biblical studies, Greek Bible / New Testament
3. Ecumenical studies
4. Interreligious studies
5. Methodist History
6. Mission and Evangelism
7. Practical Theology
8. Theological Education
9. Theology and Ethics
10. Wesley studies
11. Worship and Spirituality

The next Oxford Institute will be in August 4-11, 2024. The time for application is one year before, it will be in November 2023. Applicants need to indicate what study paper or article they want to present to the Oxford Institute. Each applicant must have completed some outlines and research before November 2023, when the application must be sent. The deadline for the final paper will be May 2024, when the applicant must e-mail his or her study-paper to each of the members in the working group where the presentation will take place. The same individual applicant will receive a study-paper from another member of the same group, a study-paper to give a critical and scholarly response to in the group.

The Working Group Papers for all the previous fourteen Oxford Institutes are published in PDF files on the Oxford Institute homepage. The several hundred papers are organized after year of the institute and names of the working group. New applicants can investigate previous study-papers to get ideas of how to work and what to focus on. The Oxford Institute

“archives” also hosts a list of previous members of each Oxford Institute, and new applicants can find names from their own area and contact these previous members to get more information and inspiration to the preparation for the Oxford Institute 2024.

Each Oxford Institute has an overall theme. The theme for Oxford Institute 2024 is: *The World is My Parish: Glad Tidings of Salvation in an Age of Crisis*.

For Methodist and Wesleyan Theologians who are not members of the Oxford Institute, the Oxford Institute homepage is a bank of modern research in Methodist and Wesleyan Theology. The plenary lectures and the working group papers from fourteen Oxford Institutes count several hundred academic study-papers available for inspiration and education.



The preparations needed for the coming Oxford Institute mean for all applicants that new European applicants for membership must be recruited and supported no later than early 2023.

The British Annual Conference has put the Oxford Institute on the annual budget. Other Methodist Annual Conferences and Wesleyan organizations in Europe ought to put scholarships for Oxford Institute 2024 on their budget in 2023 and 2024. New applicants need to have the information in October 2023 whether

they have economic support for membership of the Oxford Institute 2024 or not.

The cost for individual membership in 2024 Oxford Institute is 1000 £, which includes eight days accommodation in single rooms and full pension in Keble College, Oxford. In addition to the cost paid to the Oxford Institute you have the travel expenses to Oxford Institute. The nearest airport is London Heathrow, and then an Airport Buss directly to Oxford Central Buss station, short walking distance to Keble College.

The Oxford Institute is organized by *World Methodist Council*, with 75 member-churches and totally nearly 90 million individual members globally. The outgoing Oxford Institute elect the president and Co-chairs for the incoming Oxford Institute. The Duke University, Wesley Study Center, Professor Randy Maddox, is the executive officer between the sessions of the Oxford Institute, and hosts the homepage and all information on the homepage. In the group of co-chairpersons for the Oxford Institute-period 2018-2024 we find the following Methodist Theologians from Europe: Martin Wellings, British Methodist Church and Charlotte Thaarup, Uniting Church of Sweden. British secretary of the Oxford Institute is George Bailey, and European consultants are Tim Macquiban and Colin Smith.

The *European Methodist Council* appeals to each of the twelve membership churches:

- **to** budget for scholarships in 2024 to the Oxford Institute 2024
- **to** find and encourage young scholars to apply for membership of the Oxford Institute 2024
- **to** encourage all our Seminaries and Higher Schools for Pastoral training to be represented at the Oxford Institute 2024
- **to** make Oxford Institute 2024 known among our pastors and scholars
- **to** find some experienced theologian who can support and help applicants to prepare for and work out their study-papers before May 2024 for presentation in working groups at the Oxford Institute August 2024.

John Wesley's seal:

Πιστος αχρι θανατου

Rev. 2:10

**The God of peace himself sanctify you wholly
and may the whole of you,
the spirit and the soul and the body,
be preserved blameless
unto the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Faithfull is he that calleth you, who also will do *it!*
Amen!**

**1 Thess 5:23-24
*Wesley Notes Upon NT***

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Wesleyan – Methodism – Practical Divinity

Extracted from Langford: Practical Divinity

This booklet is an introduction and an invitation. Introducing a theological tradition that is seldom considered in its entire breadth and continuing vitality, an overview of a great European protestant theological tradition, it issues an invitation for interested persons to go beyond this initial presentation to more detailed study.

The name of this tradition is several: Wesleyan and Methodism. John Wesley introduced: *Practical Divinity*. These words describe his understanding of the nature and purpose of theology. The use of *Wesleyan Theology in Europe* is the result of much discussion and serious consideration. This phrase was chosen in an attempt to indicate the inner life of the tradition and emphasize the theological core of this movement in Europe. The term does not refer to specific ecclesiastical structures within Methodism, such as Wesleyan Methodism in Great Britain, or the Wesleyan Churches, or Wesleyan Covenant Association in America, or specific Wesleyan organizations or publishers, nor is it intended to exclude important parts of the movement, such as the Evangelical United Brethren, the Church of the Nazarene, the Free Methodist Church, Salvation Army, Uniting Churches, or the Wesleyan theology fully integrated into the Anglican Theological tradition. The word *Methodist* was not used in the title of this booklet because of its denominational denotations, although this is not an altogether happy decision, since Methodist may be a synonym for Wesleyan. The decision was made principally in order to root the tradition in British Revd. MA John Wesley (1703-1791) and to trace his influence among those who are his heirs.

This booklet is an effort to bring the sweep and dynamic of the Wesleyan Theology in Europe to the attention of a wide audience. Description, not criticism, has been the primary intention. Thorough assessments of many of the theologians presented, relation of this Wesleyan tradition to developments in other theological traditions are necessary and ongoing tasks, which hopefully, this introduction and overview will help to stimulate.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Langford, 1983, preface