

A. DONALD MACLEOD, *C. Stacey Woods and the Evangelical Rediscovery of the University*. IVP Academic, Downers Grove, IL 2007, 283 pp. ISBN 9780830834327. \$ 20.

The life and work of Australian-born evangelist C. Stacey Woods (1909–1983) is the subject of a rich biography by Donald Macleod, Research Professor of Church History at Tyndale Theological Seminary in Toronto, and author of a biography of Canadian evangelical historian W. Stanford Reid. The author served as general director of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship of Canada between 1975 and 1980. This made him well-acquainted with the world of the protagonist of this biography, who was one of author's predecessors in this evangelical student organization.

Stacey Woods occupies an important place in the ongoing story of faith and science, as a key leader in the evangelical student organization in North America and as the motor behind the founding of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) in 1947. His career corrects a common misconception that the international Christian student movement was a purely American export. Woods' presence proves this wrong. He was raised in the Christian Brethren tradition in Australia, where his father moved as an itinerant preacher. His father's Anglo-Saxon network helped him to attend key evangelical colleges in the U.S., in Dallas Texas and in Wheaton Illinois in the early 1930s. Woods gained some business experience before he entered a life-long career in the Christian student movement.

His first post at age 25 was as general secretary of the Canadian Interservice organization, which was still in its infancy. From Canada he helped to draw in orthodox evangelical students in America who had become alienated from the established Christian student organizations such as the Student Volunteer Movement and the Young Men's Christian Association. In the organizational history of these organizations there are many parallels, especially in its international orientation. Woods was the leader who created first a coherent national and soon an international network for orthodox students.

This new organization drew its inspiration and missionary zeal from the China Inland Mission. It catered to the needs of a growing student body in North America, spurred by the many returning veterans who entered college. Wood himself was just ahead of this generation and fit into the rediscovery of the heroism of faith. This moral energy revitalized the faith missions and brought missionaries in close contact with businessmen who trained the organizations in operations and administration. This cooperation between clerics and businessmen is one of the intriguing parts of this book, though not its

main focus. It helps to understand why Woods' finest hour was the opening of the conference facilities at Schloss Mittersill in Austria in September 1968. The event brought civil and religious dignitaries to this international hub of a new generation of Christian academics. However, it was also a source of tension between organizers and academics. Despite his academic target group Woods seemed to have sided more with the former than with the latter.

Here we touch upon one of the many areas of tension that Woods faced. Another one was the counter-cultural character of the organization. Due to Woods non-American background the organization was less American than others in its use of marketing tools. This attracted students who stood critical of various aspects of American culture, such as the issue of race relations, pacifism, the tension between democratic governance and individual leadership.

Though the author appreciated his subject, the book contains sufficient critical distance for a level-headed assessment. Woods was too private to allow much inspection of his inner world, but that does not prevent the reader from getting a clear understanding of what made him tick. Woods' drive, his perfectionism, and his "compulsive need to see things happen" were all geared to reach students with the gospel. This is the most intriguing part of his personality: he had no first-hand experience of life at secular universities which made him conscious of the temptation for Christians to withdraw in their own college system. Woods encouraged the founding of a publishing house (Intervarsity Press) to defend traditional Christianity and engage in debate with the secular world. And yet he approached the universities more as mission fields than as forums for intellectual debate and discoveries.

Woods had his own battles to fight, dilemma's to solve, and some character weaknesses to overcome. It proved hard to maintain harmonious bureaucratic relations amidst so much spiritual pressure. Woods was impatient, always on the road to set up chapters, consult, organize, encourage pioneers, and give edifying talks. His ceaseless traveling led to tensions with his direct colleagues who demanded his presence in the national headquarters. Moreover, pressure from the left (ecumenical movement) and the right (militant fundamentalism) forced him to perform a balancing act. Simultaneously, Intervarsity had to deal with evangelical competitors such as Campus Crusade for Christ and Navigators, and with new religious phenomena, such as the charismatic movement. According to Macleod this legacy was welcomed in the movement, but also contained in order to prevent a complete Pentecostal turn-over. Woods allowed flexibility without jeopardizing the original purpose of his mission.

This book stays close to the sources of Woods' institutional life: minutes, magazine articles, correspondence, and relatively little oral history are the basis

of this research. As Woods jumped from one place and activity to another, so does this record of his life. In this dynamic process we see an international evangelical network emerge after World War II.

This well-written book fits into the growing body of biographies explaining the rebirth of evangelicalism in the post World War II Anglo-Saxon world. Recent books include biographies of Billy Graham, Bill Bright, and Harold Ockenga. This growing series allows other scholars to draw new comparisons between this generation and the previous ones. For instance, a comparison of Woods' approach and that of John R. Mott, the founder of the YMCA, will shed light on the question whether successive student generations must solve the same dilemma's or that they have to renew their movements under pressure of changing circumstances. Woods chose for the last option.

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