



THE MCDONALD CENTRE FOR THEOLOGY, ETHICS AND PUBLIC LIFE  
FACULTY OF THEOLOGY & RELIGION, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

ON-LINE CONFERENCE: 27-28 MAY 2021

**Christianity, Commerce and Civilisation?  
Christianity and Empire Revisited: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives**

During the Modern period the study of patterns of colonialization and the development of empires has focussed on the expansion of the Western mercantile powers. A perennial question in reviewing these processes of history, commerce and politics has been the question of the role of religion and more particularly the place of Christian Missions. It is reflected in the well-known phrase of David Livingstone which forms the title for the conference. Whilst the complexity and nuances of the issues have often been recognised by professional historians, in popular discourse the debate has often been caught up in 'culture wars', in which missions and missionaries have too often simply been assumed to be 'agents of empire'. The aim of this conference is to explicate further the complexities of the relationships between Christianity, Missions, Colonies and Empire as they developed in the Modern era, and to contribute scholarly insights from historical and other disciplinary perspectives.

**Keynote Address: Professor Brian Stanley, University of Edinburgh**

***Empires Human and Divine: The Multiple Ambiguities of  
Mission Christianity in Imperial Contexts***

Brian Stanley, Professor of World Christianity at the University of Edinburgh, formerly Fellow of St Edmund's College, Cambridge, is a historian of Christian missions and world Christianity. He has been interested in the interrelationship of missions and imperialism since his first book, *The Bible and the Flag: Protestant Missions and British Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Apollos, 1990). His most recent book is *Christianity in the Twentieth Century: A World History* (Princeton University Press, 2018).

**Full Programme and Registration details:**

<https://www.mcdonaldcentreconference.info/>