

REGNUM EDINBURGH CENTENARY SERIES
Volume 34

Mission in Central and Eastern Europe:
Realities, Perspectives, Trends

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The centenary of the World Missionary Conference of 1910, held in Edinburgh, was a suggestive moment for many people seeking direction for Christian mission in the 21st century. Several different constituencies within world Christianity held significant events around 2010. From 2005, an international group worked collaboratively to develop an intercontinental and multi-denominational project, known as Edinburgh 2010, based at New College, University of Edinburgh. This initiative brought together representatives of twenty different global Christian bodies, representing all major Christian denominations and confessions, and many different strands of mission and church life, to mark the centenary.

Essential to the work of the Edinburgh 1910 Conference, and of abiding value, were the findings of the eight think-tanks or ‘commissions’. These inspired the idea of a new round of collaborative reflection on Christian mission – but now focused on nine themes identified as being key to mission in the 21st century. The study process was polycentric, open-ended, and as inclusive as possible of the different genders, regions of the world, and theological and confessional perspectives in today’s church. It was overseen by the Study Process Monitoring Group: Miss Maria Aranzazu Aguado (Spain, The Vatican), Dr Daryl Balia (South Africa, Edinburgh 2010), Mrs Rosemary Dowsett (UK, World Evangelical Alliance), Dr Knud Jørgensen (Norway, Areopagos), Rev John Kafwanka (Zambia, Anglican Communion), Rev Dr Jooseop Keum (Korea, World Council of Churches), Dr Wonsuk Ma (Korea, Oxford Centre for Mission Studies), Rev Dr Kenneth R. Ross (UK, Church of Scotland), Dr Petros Vassiliadis (Greece, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), and co-ordinated by Dr Kirsteen Kim (UK, Edinburgh 2010).

These publications reflect the ethos of Edinburgh 2010 and will make a significant contribution to ongoing studies in mission. It should be clear that material published in this series will inevitably reflect a diverse range of views and positions. These will not necessarily represent those of the series’ editors or of the Edinburgh 2010 General Council, but in publishing them the leadership of Edinburgh 2010 hopes to encourage conversation between Christians and collaboration in mission. All the series’ volumes are commended for study and reflection in both church and academy.

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**Mission in Central and Eastern Europe:
Realities, Perspectives, Trends**

Edited by
Corneliu Constantineanu, Marcel V. Măcelaru,
Anne-Marie Kool and Mihai Himcinschi

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PREFACE

The Edinburgh 2010 Common Call emerged from the Edinburgh 2010 study process and conference marking the centenary of the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910. The Common Call, cited below, was affirmed in the Church of Scotland Assembly Hall in Edinburgh on 6 June 2010, by representatives of world Christianity, including Catholic, Orthodox, Evangelical, Pentecostal, and other major Protestant churches.

As we gather for the centenary of the World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh 1910, we believe the church, as a sign and symbol of the reign of God, is called to witness to Christ today by sharing in God's mission of love through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

1. Trusting in the Triune God and with a renewed sense of urgency, we are called to incarnate and proclaim the good news of salvation, of forgiveness of sin, of life in abundance, and of liberation for all poor and oppressed. We are challenged to witness and evangelism in such a way that we are a living demonstration of the love, righteousness and justice that God intends for the whole world.

2. Remembering Christ's sacrifice on the Cross and his resurrection for the world's salvation, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are called to authentic dialogue, respectful engagement and humble witness among people of other faiths – and no faith – to the uniqueness of Christ. Our approach is marked with bold confidence in the gospel message; it builds friendship, seeks reconciliation and practises hospitality.

3. Knowing the Holy Spirit who blows over the world at will, reconnecting creation and bringing authentic life, we are called to become communities of compassion and healing, where young people are actively participating in mission, and women and men share power and responsibilities fairly, where there is a new zeal for justice, peace and the protection of the environment, and renewed liturgy reflecting the beauties of the Creator and creation.

4. Disturbed by the asymmetries and imbalances of power that divide and trouble us in church and world, we are called to repentance, to critical reflection on systems of power, and to accountable use of power structures. We are called to find practical ways to live as members of One Body in full awareness that God resists the proud, Christ welcomes and empowers the poor and afflicted, and the power of the Holy Spirit is manifested in our vulnerability.

5. Affirming the importance of the biblical foundations of our missional engagement and valuing the witness of the Apostles and martyrs, we are called to rejoice in the expressions of the gospel in many nations all over the world. We celebrate the renewal experienced through movements of migration and mission in all directions, the way all are equipped for

mission by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and God's continual calling of children and young people to further the gospel.

6. Recognising the need to shape a new generation of leaders with authenticity for mission in a world of diversities in the twenty-first century, we are called to work together in new forms of theological education. Because we are all made in the image of God, these will draw on one another's unique charisms, challenge each other to grow in faith and understanding, share resources equitably worldwide, involve the entire human being and the whole family of God, and respect the wisdom of our elders while also fostering the participation of children.

7. Hearing the call of Jesus to make disciples of all people – poor, wealthy, marginalised, ignored, powerful, living with disability, young, and old – we are called as communities of faith to mission from everywhere to everywhere. In joy we hear the call to receive from one another in our witness by word and action, in streets, fields, offices, homes, and schools, offering reconciliation, showing love, demonstrating grace and speaking out truth.

8. Recalling Christ, the host at the banquet, and committed to that unity for which he lived and prayed, we are called to ongoing co-operation, to deal with controversial issues and to work towards a common vision. We are challenged to welcome one another in our diversity, affirm our membership through baptism in the One Body of Christ, and recognise our need for mutuality, partnership, collaboration and networking in mission, so that the world might believe.

9. Remembering Jesus' way of witness and service, we believe we are called by God to follow this way joyfully, inspired, anointed, sent and empowered by the Holy Spirit, and nurtured by Christian disciplines in community. As we look to Christ's coming in glory and judgment, we experience his presence with us in the Holy Spirit, and we invite all to join with us as we participate in God's transforming and reconciling mission of love to the whole creation.

Themes Explored

The 2010 conference was shaped around the following nine study themes:

1. Foundations for mission
2. Christian mission among other faiths
3. Mission and post-modernities
4. Mission and power
5. Forms of missionary engagement
6. Theological education and formation
7. Christian communities in contemporary contexts
8. Mission and unity – ecclesiology and mission
9. Mission spirituality and authentic discipleship

The Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series to Date

Against this background a series of books was commissioned, with the intention of making a significant contribution to ongoing studies of mission. This series currently includes:¹

Edinburgh 2010: Mission Then and Now, David A. Kerr and Kenneth R. Ross (eds).

Edinburgh 2010 Volume II: Witnessing to Christ Today, Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim (eds).

Mission Continues: Global Impulses for the 21st Century, Claudia Wahrish-Oblau and Fidon Mwombeki (eds).

Holistic Mission: God's Plan for God's People, Brian Woolnough and Wonsuk Ma (eds).

Mission Today and Tomorrow, Kirsteen Kim and Andrew Anderson (eds).

The Church Going Local: Mission and Globalization, Tormod Engelsviken, Erling Lundeby and Dagfinn Solheim (eds).

Evangelical and Frontier Mission: Perspectives on the Global Progress of the Gospel, A. Scott Moreau and Beth Snodderly (eds).

Interfaith Relations after One Hundred Years: Christian Mission among Other Faiths, Marina Ngursangzeli Behera (ed).

Witnessing to Christ in a Pluralistic Age: Christian Mission among Other Faiths, Lalsangkima Pachuau and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

Mission and Post Modernities, Rolv Olsen (ed).

A Learning Missional Church: Reflections from Young Missiologists, Beate Fagerli, Knud Jørgensen, Rolv Olsen, Kari Storstein Haug and Knut Tveitereid (eds).

Life-Widening Mission: Global Anglican Perspectives, Cathy Ross (ed).

Foundations for Mission, Emma Wild-Wood and Peniel Rajkumar (eds).

Mission Spirituality and Authentic Discipleship, Wonsuk Ma and Kenneth R. Ross (eds).

A Century of Catholic Missions, Stephen Bevans (ed).

Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation, Robert Schreiter and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

Orthodox Perspectives on Mission, Petros Vassiliadis (ed).

Bible in Mission, Pauline Hoggarth, Fergus Macdonald, Knud Jørgensen and Bill Mitchell (eds).

Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity, Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Karkkainen and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu (eds).

Engaging the World: Christian Communities in Contemporary Global Society, Afe Adogame, Janice McLean and Anderson Jeremiah (eds).

Mission At and From the Margins: Patterns, Protagonists and Perspectives, Peniel Rajkumar, Joseph Dayam, I.P. Asheervadham (eds).

The Lausanne Movement: A Range of Perspectives, Margunn Serigstad Dahle, Lars Dahle and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

¹ For an up-to-date list and full publication details, see www.ocms.ac.uk/regnum/

Global Diasporas and Mission, Chandler H Im & Amos Yong (eds).

Theology, Mission and Child: Global Perspectives, B Prevette, K White, CR Velloso Ewell & DJ Konz (eds).

Called to Unity for the Sake of Mission, John Gibaut and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

Freedom of Belief and Christian Mission, Hans Aage Gravaas, Christof Sauer, Tormod Engelsviken, Maqsood Kamil and Knud Jørgensen (eds).

Korean Church, God's Mission, Global Christianity, Wonsuk Ma and Kyo Seong Ahn (eds).

FOREWORD

This 34th volume in the Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series makes a truly significant contribution to ecumenical missiological reflection. It highlights the challenges and opportunities facing Christian mission in post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe, thereby setting a clear agenda for missiologists in that context. At the same time, it invites and enables missiologists from other parts of the globe to enter into meaningful dialogue with them, to explore the similarities between their respective contexts, and to learn from the creative initiatives being undertaken there.

I wish to commend the editors and contributors for four specific features of the volume. Firstly, for the underlying theological method that gives it coherence. The sub-title (Realities, Perspectives, Trends) outlines the key dimensions of contextual theologising: Realities (context analysis = See), Perspectives (theological reflection = Judge) and Trends (ministry activities = Act). Due to the wide range of themes, not all the contributions emphasise these three dimensions equally, but the overall effect of the volume is to expose the reader to the energy and passion evident in contextual missiological reflection in the region. The reader gets a clear view of the realities “on the ground” in post-Communist Central and Eastern Europe, she is intellectually stimulated and enriched by creative theological proposals, and encouraged by the courageous witness and service of Christian communities amidst challenging circumstances.

Secondly, I wish to commend the editors for the broad inclusiveness of their project. The confessional and geographical spread of the more than thirty participants is truly impressive, allowing readers from other parts of the world to appreciate both the richness and the complexity of the church situation in Central and Eastern Europe. In its almost 700 pages, the volume is a veritable mine of information and inspiration.

Thirdly, I particularly appreciated the theological depth evident in the contributions. As with other theologies emerging out of places of suffering and deprivation on earth, recovering from legacies of sustained totalitarian rule and state propaganda, these contributions do not exude cheap triumphalism or superficial optimism; instead, a humble, grateful and grounded hope permeates the volume. It is “with gentleness and reverence” that I hear them giving an account of the hope that is in them – a hope nurtured by a persistent faith in the resurrection of the Man of Nazareth.

Fourthly, the detailed case studies from numerous countries provide an insightful picture of the historical backgrounds and the contours of the present challenges facing churches in their witness and service in Central and Eastern Europe. The volume avoided the temptation of trading in vague and nice-sounding generalities or abstract theological ideas. In the best tradition of missiological research and reflection, the contributors are rooted in concrete communities of faith, grounded in particular political,

cultural and economic realities, discerning where God is at work and how to participate in God's mission of love, freedom, joy and justice.

I sincerely hope, with the editors, that this volume will be used widely and productively as a textbook in theological education across Central and Eastern Europe (and further afield), so that it may stimulate ongoing reflection and action for the coming of the Reign of God. The contributors have rendered a sterling service to worldwide missiological literature by producing this book.

The remark in the Editorial Introduction that the demise of Communism brought not only religious freedom but also political instability, nationalism, ethnic prejudice, bureaucratic tyranny, and a litany of other woes, reminded me of the parable in Matthew 12:43-45 of the demon who left a person and later returned to its "empty house" with seven other spirits "more wicked than itself." The church of Jesus Christ faces enormous challenges emerging from the emptiness created by totalitarian regimes and the snowballing of evil resulting from their demise. May this volume inspire and empower us all to bring the humanising and liberating gospel of Jesus Christ into this broken world so deeply loved by God.

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MISSION IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

The Context

Central and Eastern Europe is one of the areas of the world that has undergone profound transformations during the 100 years delimited by the two Edinburgh gatherings that inspired the *Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series*. It is the place in which Marxist ideology gave birth to the communist hegemony that has affected the European arena for over half a century. It is the place from where there came wars, violence and genocides that have affected countless people in Europe and beyond. It is also a place where the demise of ideologically driven totalitarian regimes in 1989 has not only brought the religious freedom many had hoped for, but resulted also in further social and political instability characterized by nationalism, ethnic prejudice, bureaucratic tyranny, economic paralysis, religious fragmentation and increasingly widening economic gaps leading to poverty and despair, work migration and widespread corruption.

Nonetheless, Central and Eastern Europe is also a context that presents us with unique opportunities for mission and therefore an interesting field to look at from the perspective of mission studies. It is the place where eastern and western culture and expressions of Christianity alternately meet, clash and/or converge. It is also a place where Christianity and Islam have co-existed for centuries. And most importantly, it is a unique place, for in spite of oppressive political regimes and a lack of religious freedom, the historical churches in the region have – albeit to various degrees – preserved a strong sense of Christian identity, often closely related to national identity, and Evangelical Christianity, in some quarters, has flourished as church membership has grown notably.

Moreover, after 1989, the new-found freedom which Eastern Europe experienced, has allowed communities in the region to interact with the previously limitedly accessible western world, which, in connection with the noted growth of the Evangelical communities, has resulted in a number of developments we consider as missiologically significant: (1) The opportunity to do intentional cross-cultural mission, something which has indeed come strongly into focus in some circles; and (2) The less intentional but probably even more effective cross-cultural ministry taking place due to the phenomenon of economically motivated migration – in some places in Western Europe, the large diaspora Christian communities coming from Eastern Europe have surpassed in number the indigenous groups.

In addition to these, we ought to point out other changes, gradually taking root in the region, all of which are reflected in one way or another in the papers included in this volume: (1) The emergence of a sense of

missional responsibility within local churches, which emboldens them to break out of the ghetto-like existence to which Christian communities were reduced during decades of communist restrictions, and urges them to become witnesses in their own contexts; (2) The increased preoccupation with finding contextually appropriate expressions of Christian faith and holistic mission within the region; (3) The novel awareness churches have that there is much need for innovative partnerships and ecumenical co-operation among Christian traditions that previously were strongly opposed to each other; (4) A dawning of the reality that the incarnation of Christ has implications for the public arena, including social reconciliation and transformation; (5) The strengthening of a vision for reaching out to the marginalized and often despised Roma, often in surprising realization of what God is already doing among them; (6) The establishing of new forms of missional learning and of missiological research to strengthen the process of writing indigenous theological textbooks.

The Book

In the light of all the above, the present book, *Mission in Central and Eastern Europe: Realities, Perspectives, Trends*, attempts to accomplish a threefold aim: to celebrate a faithful, persevering church under communism, while also acknowledging the shortcomings, within and outside the church, that characterized mission in Central and Eastern Europe during the communist decades prior to 1989; to offer a complex analysis and evaluation of missionary endeavours in the region since the fall of communism and an assessment of current mission theory and practice; and to project new directions in and for mission, spelling out lessons to be learned as we identify both the challenges and opportunities lying ahead, and considering the missiological implications related to the specific experience of the church in Central and Eastern Europe.

The book brings together over forty significant contributions from theologians, missiologists and practitioners from Central and Eastern Europe, coming from thirteen different countries, and representing different Christian traditions and confessions. Contributions therefore reflect the various forms of Christianity and the geographical regions under scrutiny.

Part One

The volume is structured in three parts. The first section begins with a general overview on mission understanding and practice in Central and Eastern Europe before and after 1989 in three chapters. Here we have, in the opening chapter by Peter Kuzmič, a brief history of Christianity in the region under scrutiny, and a description of Christian witness in this part of the world as a complex story of pain, glory, persecution and freedom. In the second chapter, looking more specifically at the numerous mission

initiatives, Anne-Marie Kool explores carefully the question of what has been achieved in 25 years of East European mission. She identifies four distinct periods in mission, which moved from underground mission, to euphoria, to disillusionment, to an innovative new paradigm. Similarly, through an interview analysis about the mission of the church in the same period, Alex Vlasin reveals a slow but steady shift in various initiatives in missions and calls for further co-operation and partnerships.

Chapters Four and Five in the first section bring the Bible to the fore as the foundation for, and the message of, mission. Marcel Măcelaru argues that reading the Bible as a theological narrative, which tells the Story of God in, with and for the world, is a missiological imperative. Such a hermeneutic provides for an understanding of Christian existence as participation in God's Story. Ciprian Terinte examines the *kerygmatic* speeches found in the book of Acts, pinpointing the major Christological ideas available in the apostolic preaching recorded in this New Testament writing. The hope is that the apostolic example will help the reader formulate a relevant, theologically sound, evangelistic discourse for Central and Eastern Europe.

The last chapter in the first section introduces the imperative of ecumenism for mission in the context of a diverse European Christianity. In an increasingly secularized Europe, argues Ovidiu Druhora, an authentic Christian witness can only be manifested through a radically new, effective and action-oriented ecumenical dialogue, and through a rediscovery of the Spirit of life.

Part Two

In the second part of the book, which is also the largest, the readers will discover a richness of case studies of ongoing missiological endeavours and concrete manifestations of the embodiment of the gospel in various and specific contexts in Central and Eastern Europe. This part provides a unique insight into the complex experiences and situations of Christian churches and their roots, taking into account denominational variations and different missiological emphases. The section begins with Mihai Himeinschi's argument for an Orthodox foundation for mission – the Holy Trinity, and with Gheorghe Petraru's presentation of the essentials of Orthodox mission in Christian history and of principles of Orthodox missiology – *missio Dei* or *missio Trinitatis* – as theological science.

Continuing the discussion from an Orthodox perspective, we then have Gelu Călina's reflection on the intersections of the Kingdom of God with the kingdoms of this world, illustrated by the difficult and complex church-state relationship in the totalitarian regime of Romania; Dana Bates' case study on Orthodox youth mission, specifically the New Horizons Foundation and the IMPACT programme, which illustrates the way in which the contextualization of the gospel in an Orthodox setting has

enabled both a more profound theological vision of youth ministry and the development of practical partnerships with the Orthodox Church for serving the younger generation, and Zorica Kuburić's Serbian perspective on 'The Future of Orthodox Christianity in the Context of a Theology of Integrity'.

Dănuț Mănăstireanu's personal account of the remarkable Lausanne-Orthodox Initiative, which brings together for dialogue on mission the evangelical Lausanne Movement for World Evangelism and the Orthodox churches, is the last of the batch of studies presented in the second part of the volume that make reference to Orthodox Christianity in the region. Mănăstireanu outlines the history of the initiative, the plans of the leadership group for future similar encounters, the opportunities and obstacles, and pinpoints various prospects for the development of co-operation in holistic mission between Orthodox and Evangelical communities round the world.

The second part of the volume continues with a study by Anton Rus that introduces the reader to the Greek-Catholic Church in Romania and presents the fundamentals of mission from the perspective of this unique Byzantine church. Following this prelude, the section focuses on Roman Catholic expressions of Christianity and perspectives on mission. We have first a study by Jan Górski, who offers a comprehensive take on mission in Poland, and Jarosław M. Lipniak's study, which looks at the same geographical context but with a more specific focus on Roman Catholic mission after the political transformation of the early 1990s. Following then is a study by Mato Zovkić, a Roman Catholic theologian located in Sarajevo, who has worked to promote dialogue with Muslims in the spirit of Vatican II and the post-conciliar guidelines of the Catholic magisterium. Given this expertise, his is the only study in the volume that gives a comprehensive perspective on the encounter between Christianity and Islam in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Another shift in focus is introduced in the study authored by Pavol Bargár, which explores the topic of Christian mission in the Czech Republic from an ecumenical (evangelical) perspective. He argues that, in order for Christian churches and communities to pursue their missional calling in the Czech context, they ought to take specific contextual identifiers seriously, as many aspects of such identifiers – post-rationalistic, post-ideological, post-optimistic, post-traditional, post-individualistic and post-materialistic – have significant potential for establishing and pursuing authentic and relevant Christian presence, witness and mission. Writing from within the same context, we also have Zuzana Jurechová and Viktória Šoltésová, who report on two significant mission conferences held in Prague and Bratislava in 2011.

The next five studies focus on the Romanian context from an evangelical perspective. Vasile Marchiș evaluates the broad spectrum of views on evangelism within Romanian Pentecostalism, and points to the need for

further theological reflection on how the relationship between the gospel, Christian community and Christian witness is understood. Only in this way, he argues, can the churches formulate a missionary task that will make Christian communities relevant as social and cultural witnesses today. Marcel Măcelaru offers a case study on practices of evangelization and church growth by looking at the example of the Elim Pentecostal Church from Timișoara, Romania. The study covers the period 1990-1997, a time during which membership in this local Pentecostal community more than tripled in number, thus making this denomination one of the largest Pentecostal churches in Europe. Gheorghe Rîțișan and Corneliu Constantineanu present a remarkable case study on cross-cultural mission originating from Eastern Europe through an analysis of the ecclesiological and missiological context that led to the establishment of the Romanian Pentecostal Agency for Foreign Mission (APME) – one of the youngest yet very dynamic missionary structures currently operating in Europe. In another paper, Ligia Măcelaru and Marcel Măcelaru report on ACAS (Association for Capacitating People with Special Abilities), a ministry focusing primarily on children and adults with disabilities. The authors hope to raise awareness regarding the urgency of such missiological endeavours in this part of the world. Along similar lines, the study by Bill Prevette and Corneliu Constantineanu that concludes this section on mission in the Romanian context from an evangelical perspective, addresses the issue of children at risk in Romania. The authors offer a historical analysis, pinpointing the factors that caused the serious child crisis in this country, and argue for serious biblical, theological and missiological reflection, leading to engagement on behalf of these children in need.

Two articles that bring to fore the Hungarian context come next. First, Ábrahám Kovács explores the nineteenth-century roots of the rather debated question, especially after the Holocaust, of mission to the Jews. He investigates and assesses the way in which Jewish mission took place in Hungary via Scottish Evangelicalism, transplanted by the Calvinism of the Free Church of Scotland into Central Europe's largest country, the Hungarian Kingdom, of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Second, Dorottya Nagy uses the example of Chinese Christian migrants in Hungary, seen within the global framework of Christian interconnectedness, to advance a proposal for interdisciplinarity in mission studies. Of particular interest is the attention she gives to 'migration', as an analytical category and social reality, showing its importance for religious studies from a theological-missiological perspective. She argues that research must move beyond the so-called church-sect typology and the new religious movements framework, on the one hand, and beyond secularization theories and market theories of religion and methodological nationalism/ethnicity, on the other.

Kostake Milkov's study sifts the focus to the Macedonian context and advocates 'dialogue as mission'. The study illustrates a holistic and integrative understanding of Christian mission in relationship to contemporary culture by pointing to the Balkan Institute for Faith and Culture, in Skopje, Macedonia.

The next set of studies, offered in the second part of the book, have theological education as their common theme. Parush R. Parushev addresses the challenges of contextualization, credibility and relevance of evangelical theological education from a convictional theological perspective. He argues that such education should be guided by a bi-focal vision: a) to aim at strengthening the convictional identity of the faith community which it addresses (through practices of informal and formal learning); b) to participate in the mission of the public university to educate the whole person (through practices and teleological aims of academic theological education). Julijana Mladenovska-Tešija, focusing on the Croatian context, examines Protestant theological institutions of higher education and reflects upon the relationship between their academic roles and the churches these serve. The three-axial framework within which the discussion is placed includes: the local context (transitional, minority), the European educational agenda ('the Bologna paradigm'), and a global perspective on education (educational trends in a globalized world). The article also offers proposals and recommendations for the future of Protestant higher education in Croatia on the basis of the Edinburgh 2010 Pointers on Theological Education. Eric J. Titus offers a personal reflection on the transformational experience he had being engaged in cross-cultural mission in Croatia, where he, as a US citizen, served for several years as a lecturer in a seminary. Using Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon as a metaphor, the author reflects on the 'inability' to truly return home – that is, to become again what one was before answering Christ's call to mission. Wojciech Szerbera reports on the evolution and activity of the Evangelical School of Theology (EST) from Wrocław, Poland since 1990. He shows how changes within the Polish context (historical, social, cultural and religious), have prompted changes within the nature and activity of EST, from a basic Biblical theological seminary serving the Evangelical community in Poland, to the current EST Educational Centre, which offers versatile programmes and projects for a much larger Christian community in Poland and abroad. This particular case study illustrates the way in which the mission, vision and values of an institution can remain relevant and find new applicability, even when faced with changing cultural and social environments. Finally, the article by Peter Penner, although not on theological education *per se*, is included here because it provides a good example of the kind of work awaiting theologians and theological institutions in Eastern and Central Europe. Penner reports on the completion of the Slavic Bible Commentary, a one-volume collaborative work, in which specific interpretative keys were used, focusing on

contextualization, missional relevance, and community hermeneutics. The purpose of the commentary is to help church and mission leaders, preachers and teachers of the church, to understand and apply the word of God within their local contexts as involvement in the mission of God.

The final batch of articles in the second part deal with Roma Christianity in Eastern and Central Europe. First, Anne-Marie Kool looks at the way in which East European churches have responded to the Roma people since the fall of the Berlin Wall. She first offers a bird's-eye view on the issue, especially with respect to the Conference of European Churches (CEE), the European Baptist Federation, Gypsy Pentecostalism, and the Roman Catholic Church. The chapter then gives a critical analysis of the underlying 'models' or paradigms used by churches, seeking to uncover the motivation behind these responses. Finally, a way forward is proposed, aiming to overcome the limitations of the current paradigms and ending with some practical suggestions. It is argued that a key question for the East European 'majority' churches is how they could facilitate moving from 'mission to the Roma', to 'Roma churches', to a 'church for all'! This is an important chapter, which draws lessons from how churches and mission organizations are responding to the Roma people, and subsequently initiates a process of reflection on the issue, from a missiological perspective, hoping to stimulate further research at grassroots level. Second, Melody J. Wachsmuth shows that currently, despite vast international attention and allocated financial resources from the European Union, NGOs and religious entities – as well as Romani politicians, intellectuals, and grassroots organizations – steps to minimize Romani social isolation and poverty continue to make small, non-existent, or even retroactive progress in the CEE. Historically, the church's relationship with the Roma largely mirrored, and still continues to mirror, societal attitudes. Juxtaposed with these realities is the continued growth of Roma Christianity, particularly in Pentecostal and charismatic forms in the CEE. With an eye to the historical and current context, this chapter draws from secondary and primary sources to present a general introduction to Roma Christianity in south-eastern Europe, Bulgaria and Romania, and draws out certain themes, questions and challenges that appear across multiple contexts. These challenges and themes highlight further areas of study as well as pinpoint the Roma church's important role within its respective society and the global church at large. Finally, Aleksandar Apostolovski offers a detailed case study of a Roma community in Macedonia. He provides a theological evaluation of the use of education – the operation and effects of the after-school programme and literacy classes – in the missionary activities of the Evangelical Church Saraj, located on the western outskirts of Skopje, Macedonia. It is suggested that greater appreciation of the world as God's restored temple, and of reading and writing as means of practising *imitatio Dei* may be of use for any missionary activities among Roma children.

Part Three

The third part of the book looks at challenges and opportunities for Christian mission in Central and Eastern Europe. In a few programmatic articles, several missiological implications are drawn and directions for further missiological reflection and activity are given. The section begins with two articles reflecting on aspects of mission theory and practice in the light of new contextual realities European churches face. Bogdan Dolenc looks at the role of ecumenical dialogue in a new Europe and indicates specific steps towards a purification of historical memories in the Balkans. Pavel Černý advances a relevant mission theology for the post-secular environment, with a focus on the situation in the Czech Republic. He addresses relevant missiological questions arising in the context of contemporary multi-faith society, envisions new ecclesiological forms, and summarizes both the holistic and the kenotic dimension of the church. He shows that churches and theological institutions must put more emphasis on changing their missional paradigm so as to respond to the spiritual hunger evident in the contemporary population, which is longing for spiritual experiences.

The third section of the book also includes a batch of articles that focuses on themes and activities we consider relevant for the future of mission in the region. Branimir Dukić, a marketing specialist, offers an interesting perspective on the possibilities of marketing for religious organizations in the digital age. Eugen Jugaru underlies the important contribution Christian business people can bring to societal progress. Reference is made to two important documents, the *Lausanne Document on Business as Mission* and the *Oxford Declaration on Christian Faith and Economics*, both of which identify business activity as an important instrument for mission. Also in this section, Corneliu Constantineanu and Marcel V. Măcelaru report on an event whose strong future outlook justifies its mention here. The report summarizes the findings of the September 2013 *Reimagining the Seminary* conference, which took place in Bucharest, Romania. The purpose of the meeting was to offer theological educators and church leaders a platform for interaction as they addressed topics related to the task and method of theological institutions in the context of new social, political, economic and ecclesial realities. The particularity of this event was its focus on the nature and values of the Kingdom of God, as expressed by Jesus' symbolic gesture of placing a child in the midst of a theological argument on leadership in the Kingdom (Matthew 18), as its central theological motif and primary missiological motivator.

Another topic of interest addressed in this part of the book pertains to the public face of Christian faith and consequently Christian mission. First, Mihai Himeinschi makes an argument for nation-building as an important missiological contribution by the church in contemporary society, and to that end he explores the implications of Trinitarian monotheism. Second,

Corneliu Constantineanu reflects on public theology as a missiological endeavour of the church in our post-totalitarian, ever-in-transition, context. Learning from, and in interaction with, those who have reflected on these issues before us, he points out several significant features of public theology, and highlights some of the most relevant issues of public engagement in the context of Central and Eastern Europe.

We found it only appropriate that the book should conclude with Anne-Marie Kool's 'A Missiologist's Look at the Future: A Missiological Manifesto for the 21st Century', an article in which the author seeks to contribute to, and encourage, the ongoing conversation on the future of the church in mission in Europe, with a special focus on Central and Eastern Europe. The article is based on the author's personal experience of living and working as a missionary and missiologist in the eastern part of Europe, while also keeping in touch with missiological developments in her own country of birth, the Netherlands, elsewhere in Europe, and in North-America. The result is a missiological manifesto for Europe, a statement of vision and values, reflecting on future perspectives and challenges in key areas for mission as a starting-point for further discussion.

As evident from the final chapter, which reflects well the final purpose of the whole volume, we hope that the collection of papers offered will serve as a tool for further reflection on mission in Central and Eastern Europe in the lifelong learning of pastors, church leaders, missionaries and leaders of mission organizations, as well as a foundation for further academic reflection on mission. We also hope that this volume will be used as a textbook in missiological and theological education, as it contains contributions to be used as missiological dimensions of the various disciplines of Biblical Studies, Church History, Systematic Theology and Practical Theology.

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