

XIth quadrennial Assembly of the International Association of Mission Studies
Malaysia, July 31 to August 7, 2004

Report to the IAMS prepared by Prof. Dr. Anne-Marie Kool, IAMS member and president
of the Central and Eastern European Association of Mission Studies (CEEAMS)

REPORT ON THE CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF MISSION STUDIES (CEEAMS)

History

In November 2002 the Central and Eastern European Association for Mission Studies was inaugurated in the Protestant Institute for Mission Studies in Budapest, Hungary, on the initiative of those in a leadership position at chairs in missiology in Central and Eastern Europe, or Mission Institutes: Dr. Vladimir Federov (Interchurch Partnership, St. Petersburg, Russia) Dr. Peter Penner (International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague, Czech Republic), Prof. Dr. Jan Gorski, Krakow University, Dr. Sergei Shikorov (Moscow Center for Mission Studies, Moscow, Russia), Drs. Sándor Gaál and Drs. László Gonda (Reformed University of Divinity in Debrecen, Hungary) and Dr. Anne-Marie Kool (Protestant Institute for Mission Studies, Budapest, and the Reformed Theological Academy in Papa, Hungary).

The headquarters of the Association will be situated in the Protestant Institute for Mission Studies in Budapest, Hungary.

Over the last few years missiologists from Central and Eastern Europe met at various conferences, most recently at the International Association for Mission Studies-Europe conference in Halle and for the last four years or so at the Missiological Research Fellowship meetings of the Protestant Institute for Mission Studies in Budapest, Hungary. Others met recently in Rome at an IAMS conference on "Rescuing the memories of our people".

At these meetings we realized that we all face more or less the same struggles in formulating and addressing the missiological issues of our "post-communist" contexts and in introducing a new discipline in the theological curriculum: missiology. It also became clear, that we hardly know of what each of us is doing in the area of research, teaching and publications.

Since this - pioneering - situation in Central and Eastern Europe differs so much from countries in e.g. Western Europe where missiology has been well established for many years, the need was increasingly felt to establish a special Central and Eastern European international and interdenominational platform to serve and coordinate the small initiatives in this field, linked internationally to the International Association of Mission Studies. The aims of the CEEAMS will be similar to those of IAMS.

The growing significance of the region's contribution to wider missiological research and discussion is evidenced by the involvement of a number of CEEAMS members in confessional and inter-confessional processes, specifically the European Mission Research Project of the Conference of European Churches, the Leuenberg Fellowship, the International Association of Catholic Missiologists, the Commission for Ecumenical Theological Education of the World Council of Churches, the Council for East European Theological Education, and key Orthodox mission programmes, including a soon to be published biography of Orthodox missionaries.

Activities

From May 12-15, 2004 the first CEEAMS conference was held in Budapest, Hungary, with 20 representatives of a wide range of countries, educational institutions and denominations in the region, including Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Russia, Ukraine, Serbia, Bulgaria, Austria, Romania, and Hungary. CEEAMS has an active interest in increasing missiological research activity within the region hence it was logical that this year's Conference should take a closer look at Missiological Education in Central and Eastern Europe. Participants included those involved in teaching missions, missiology and ecumenics at an academic level and those considered to be "potential" educators.

Executive Committee

In May 2004 the General Meeting of CEEAMS voted as members of the Executive Committee for a period of four years: Prof. Dr. Anne-Marie Kool as Chair, Prof. Dr. Jan Gorski and Dr. Vladimir Federov as Vice Chairs, Dr. Peter Penner as Treasurer, and Dr. Scott Klingsmith and Dr. Dimitrije Popadic as co-Editors of the proposed new CEEAMS journal.

Membership

The CEEAMS has right now about thirty members. The question of membership fees was left unanswered pending a discussion within IAMS about fees for individuals who are simultaneously members of IAMS and of one of its related associations.

Membership of the Association is limited to those holding an appropriate doctoral qualification, Associate Membership would be open to those enrolled on an appropriate doctoral program or those holding a Master's degree and teaching missiology/mission studies at an Institution. Both should be sponsored by two existing members of the Association and admitted by vote of the Executive Committee.

Publications

With the relatively recent development of missiology as a theological discipline in the region, joint endeavours remain in their infancy and there exists the need for developing more extensive systems of co-operation. There are no databases of member's research interests and expertise, publications, or teaching programmes. Peer review of missiological reflection and research conducted within the region has not been possible and CEEAMS members have taken the first steps towards the publication of a new journal to reflect the interests and needs of its members within the region. The language would be English with articles also available in the language of the author, it would be published at least once a year. The editorial address is the Protestant Institute for Mission Studies in Budapest (P.O.Box 150, 1461 Budapest, Hungary). Dr. Scott Klingsmith and Dr. Dimitrije Popadice were appointed as co-Editors, mandated to develop a fuller proposal, including a journal name, etc.

Future Plans of Missiological Research

At the next CEEAMS conference, likely to be in Slovakia, called for the 1st to 3rd June 2005, CEEAMS members proposed a missiological consultation on the subject of minorities, more specifically: mission among the Roma peoples of Central and Eastern Europe.

Budapest, 26 July 2004

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Represented Institutions in CEEAMS:

1. Interchurch Partnership/Orthodox Institute for Missiological Research, St. Petersburg, Russia
2. Protestant Institute for Mission Studies, Budapest, Hungary
3. Chair of Missiology, University of Krakow, Poland
4. Department of Mission and Evangelism at International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague, Czech Republic
5. Department of Missions, Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary, Kiev, Ukraine
6. Chair of Missiology, Debrecen Reformed University, Debrecen, Hungary
7. Chair of Missiology, Reformed Theological Seminary, Papa, Hungary
8. Moscow Center for Mission Studies, Moscow, Russia
9. Department of Evangelical Theology and Mission of University Matej Bela, Banska Bystrica, Slovakia
10. Department of Missiology of Novisad Theological College