



BRILL

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Call for Papers for a Special Issue on “Crisis and Mission”

As an international, multi-disciplinary, peer-reviewed journal, *Mission Studies* provides a platform for the publication of advanced research in the areas of historical and contemporary Christian missions and their manifold connectivities. It is within this context that we call for papers for a special issue on “Crisis and Mission.”

As in childbirth, the mood of humanity in this hour is a strange amalgam of two contradictory emotions – agony and exultation, fear and expectation. All through these latter years – not merely six years of world conflict, but thirty years of war, respite, regirding and war renewed – another single word has chorused through the vocabulary of mankind until they weary of its reiteration. It is the word “crisis.” It has been repeated so tiresomely because it so accurately reflects the deepest nature of our times.

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN, *World Christianity: Yesterday-Today-Tomorrow*. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1947: xi

These words, written by the ecumenist Henry P Van Dusen three-quarters of a century ago, have not lost their relevance. Socio-political phenomena, processes, and events continue to be perceived in public and academic discourses as crises: crises of economies, politics, nation states, social cohesion, peace, and security; refugee crises; health and pandemic crises; ecological, cultural, and civilizational crises; psychological and identity crises; justice, humanitarian, gender, and racial crises; religious crises – just to name a few.

Mission studies is also preoccupied with crisis. A quick browse in the literature of the last seventy-five years reveals the global importance of “crisis” in the work of theologians, missiologists, and related scholars. David Bosch understood mission as an answer to “contemporary crisis”; Leslie Newbigin saw crisis in his reading of the times; Emanuel Katangole writes about the “crisis of belonging”; C.S. Song links the need for narrativity with experiences of crisis; Mercy Amba Oduyoye explores women’s responses in the face of crisis; and Justo L. Gonzalez points to the crisis of theological education. Numerous papal encyclicals refer to and address various crises, and Eastern Orthodox and

Oriental Orthodox theologians have written extensively on responses to crisis. While some missiologists have formulated conceptual frameworks and explored religion/Christian faith as a resource for living and surviving in “times of crises,” others have examined the implications of concrete crises for Christian community and missionary practice living in the midst of, and suffering the lasting consequences of, crises.

In light of the above observations, and acknowledging that understandings of mission and crisis are always contextual, this call for papers invites scholars to submit articles on mission and crisis, which

- Present innovative and authentic missiological/intercultural/mission-studies research on contexts, situations, cases, and phenomena conceived as sites of crisis in the past or present;
- Address mission and crisis in their historical and global entanglements;
- Present case studies and novel analyses of crisis/crises;
- Address theories and epistemologies of crisis within mission studies;
- Critically examine how the concept of crisis functions in different societal sectors and how theologies of mission relate to those functions;
- Consider who labels events or phenomena as a “crisis,” and how “crisis” is perceived and responded to differently in diverse geopolitical regions or social groups;
- Present innovative methodologies emerging from and related to the topic;
- Explore questions such as:
 - What is the link between mission and crisis?
 - To what extent are ideologies and epistemologies of crisis operant in missionary enterprises?
 - To what extent do crises inform theologies of mission, and *vice versa*, to what extent do mission theologies and praxis relate to contexts of crisis?
 - How can mission studies make sense of, and provide resources for, living in times of crisis?
 - What are appropriate terminological toolboxes for mission studies through which discourses on crisis can become more interdisciplinary and relevant for the wider societies? (E.g. how are concepts such as justice, vulnerability, resilience, transformation, salvation, and love relevant for developing discourses on mission and crisis?)

Papers between 6,000–8,000 words in length should be submitted no later than **1st March, 2021**, through the journal’s online Editorial Manager system: <https://www.editorialmanager.com/MIST/default.aspx>.

For technical details, please consult the *Instructions for Authors* on the Journal's website.

The journal welcomes original research representing a variety of theoretical perspectives and different methodological approaches.

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