

A Report on Efforts made to establish an

International Journal of Missiology

At the meeting held during the European Conference on Mission Studies in Oslo in August 1970, at which it was decided to found an International Association for Mission Studies, "a need for an international ecumenical and scientific journal of mission studies was generally voiced", and "the Provisional Committee were instructed to investigate the possibilities" (Minutes, p.3).

The proposed constitution for the Association, therefore, specifically states that one of the Association's objects shall be: "to stimulate publications in the area of the Association's interests, including an international journal and bibliography".

The matter of the Journal was fully discussed by the Provisional Committee at its meeting at Alverna, Netherlands, November 1970 (the only meeting which, for financial and other reasons it has been able to hold). It was agreed "(a) that Professor Myklebust be the association's editor, (b) that the Provisional Committee constitute an interim editorial board; (c) that Mr. Walls approach Messrs. E. J. Brill of Leiden with a view to their undertaking publication; (d) that approaches be made to Evangelische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Weltmission and the S.C. de Propaganda Fide concerning financial support should this be necessary; (e) that relationships with existing journals be kept in mind (Minutes, p.2).

Due to unforeseen circumstances, and difficulties experienced in the efforts of the committee to secure the necessary data, more than one year elapsed before plans of a more concrete nature could be worked out. A memorandum entitled "An International Journal for Missiology: Some Reflections and Suggestions", prepared by the secretary of the committee, was sent in April 1972 to the chairman and members of the committee. It was at a later date sent also to Professor E. Jansen Schoonhoven. A copy of the document is enclosed herewith. What follows is partly an account of re-actions received to it, partly additional remarks on some of the questions with which it deals.

The committee recommends, unanimously and emphatically, that an international journal of the type indicated be established at the earliest possible date. According to Professor Gensichen, the chairman of the committee, "the idea of Missio should indeed be pursued, but there is a number of problems still to be solved, foremost among them finding a publisher, the *conditio sine qua non* for everything else, including a draft budget."

In the opinion of Dr. Samartha the proposed journal, to be able to make a significant contribution to the whole discussion as to the meaning and practice of mission to-day, must fulfil a distinctive function different from the already existing journals.

President Anderson raises the question of possibly putting the journal title at least in English rather than in Latin. Also, he thinks that it is worth investigating what have been the experiences of journals, such as the "International Review of Mission", which appear entirely in English. As regards contents the suggestion is made that the last issue or, alternatively and preferably, a special number each year be devoted to an annual bibliographical review or survey of mission literature.

Professor Camps, finally, has specially interested himself in the name of the proposed journal. Of the titles suggested by the secretary he prefers "Acta Missiologica". "Journal of Missiology" or "International Journal of Mission Studies", too, are good titles, as the word "journal" indicates a scientific publication. On the otherhand "Studia Missionaria" cannot be accepted, as there exists in Rome a review entitled "Studia Missionalia", and "Missio" does not sufficiently indicate the scholarly nature of the venture.

So far the re-actions received to the memorandum of April 15, 1972. Some additional remarks concerning some of the points raised there follow.

1. The question of finding a publisher has occupied the members of the committee ever since its meeting at Alverna in November 1970, but until April this year no answer had been found. Even now we do not see clearly our way in this matter. However, the situation is not without hopeful features. As far as publisher is concerned, Dr. Walls, who has investigated the possibilities which Britain offers, reports that Messrs Marcham Manor Press are interested, but would

like more details of expected circulation, etc. The university presses of Oxford and Cambridge, too, have been approached, but at the time of writing their re-actions are not known.

As regards Messrs. E. J. Brill of Leiden, Professor E. Jansen Schoonhoven, at the request of the committee, has been kind enough to make enquiries. Brill's are definitely interested. In the words of the Director, Mr. Wieder, "such a journal would fit in with the character of our firm". However, because of the difficult economic situation they can undertake to publish the journal only on condition that a subsidy be guaranteed. They publish about 40 scientific journals. Of these only three are self-supporting.

In the report of his conversation with Director Wieder on June 22, 1972, Professor Jansen Schoonhoven also has this to say:

"Thinking of a journal that appears in 4 issues a year, of 80 pages each, the subscription fee would become 60-80 Dutch guilders, which of course is far too high. It would have to be reduced to 30-40 Dutch guilders. Mr. Wieder assumed that a yearly subsidy of 15.-20.000 Dutch guilders would be necessary, at least in the first three years. If the number of subscribers would increase above expectations, the subsidy could be diminished."

2. Finance. - This is, of course, our main problem, and it is therefore imperative that a satisfactory solution to it be found. By pooling our resources as a world fellowship we ought to be able to raise the funds required. If a subsidy of 20.000 Dutch guilders will be needed, 50 per cent of this amount might be paid in the form of contributions from institutional members (which would mean that, on the basis of the present corporate membership, each institution on an average would pay 250 Dutch guilders), and the remaining 50 per cent through contributions from scientific foundations, councils, etc. in the several countries as well as from special bodies such as the Sacra Congregatio pro Gentium Evangelizatione in Rome and the Evangelische Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Weltmission in Hamburg. A number of the leading missionary boards and societies in the USA and Europe, too, might be approached with a view to enlisting their support.

To reduce production costs the number of issues a year may be cut down from four to three (of 80 pages each), and further, although we hesitate to suggest this, the number of pages in each

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issue from 80 to 64. Each volume of "Numen", the review of the International Association for the History of Religion, comprises three issues or 240 pages. Similarly, the number of languages to be used may be reduced from three to one (English). (We have had a cri de cœur from Latin America that the journal should regard Spanish as an "official" language.)

3. Bibliography. - The importance of making an annual bibliographical survey a special feature of the proposed journal can hardly be overemphasized. The survey should list publications in the different languages in the field of missiology as well as in related fields of study. However, this plan may have to be altered or modified as a result of closer co-operation in bibliography and documentation. We refer to investigations made by Dr. Walls, and on which he will report to this conference, concerning a joint "ecumenical" bibliography incorporating "Bibliografia Missionaria".

4. Name. - A brief title such as "Missio" is to be preferred to some longer name in Latin or English, cf. "Numen" (to which reference was just made) and "Oriens" (journal of the International Society for Oriental Research). If the entire review is to be in English, the name, too, may be in this language. In this case the word "Journal" in some form or other should appear in the title.

5. Editor(s). - The appointment of the editor, or editors, should be made at the earliest possible date. Also, an (advisory?) editorial board should be set up, fully representative of the geographical areas, church traditions, etc. reflected in the Association's membership.

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Olav Guttorm Myklebust