



ResearchMatters

Issue 2, January-March 2011

The Quarterly Newsletter of OMF Mission Research

Welcome to the second issue of *Research Matters* the quarterly newsletter of OMF Missions Research

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FROM THE MISSION RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

2010 has been a year of consultations! I am, of course, not just thinking about the OMF Mission Research Consultation which looked at the interplay between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit World of Asia, but the Consultations which have been held around the globe. From Edinburgh in the North to Lausanne III at Cape Town in the South, from Tokyo in the East and to Boston in the West, Christians have been considering afresh how we participate in the process of mission.



Prof. Dana Robert at Edinburgh 2010

One important contributor to this process, Dana Robert, a historian of mission, gave presentations at both the consultations in Edinburgh 2010 (June) and in 2010 Boston (November). This past year has also seen the publication and dissemination of *Joy to the World!* an introduction and study guide to mission in the context of Global Christianity and a significant book by her on the history of mission entitled *Christian Mission*.

In this edition of *Research Matters*, I would like to draw attention to Prof. Robert's contributions to Edinburgh 2010 both as a way of looking at her own contribution on the shape of global Christianity and its implications for mission and to start a process of reflection on the four global Consultations which have taken place in the past year. In reflecting on the significance of Edinburgh 2010, Robert looks at three moments in time: the events of Edinburgh

1910, the founding nearly 50 years later of the WCC; our contemporary moment in history 100 years on in 2010.

Three moments in time over the last century

1) 1910 – the conference in Edinburgh itself

The 1910 Edinburgh Missionary Conference represents an important moment of reflection for the Christian church on the task of mission:

“A century ago, over twelve hundred delegates from Protestant missionary societies came by ship and train to Edinburgh. ... They gathered under the assumption that missions operated in the context of western colonialism. But they departed with a prophetic glimpse of Christianity as a worldwide fellowship! In other words, the conference itself awakened them to the reality that discussions of mission policy could not be separated from the deeper meaning of the church as a worldwide community united before God.” (Robert, 2010, 3-4)

This was the time when the church was about to grasp ‘the great demographic shift’ that had been taking place, and would continue to occur as the fruits of the mission movements that had taken place in the 19th century (and earlier) and that had helped to shape the global church. Though, Robert (6-7) also points out that the face of global Christianity was about to change in ways that would have been hard to grasp in 1910 especially in terms of the European church's numerical collapse and particularly negative reactions by colonial powers to vernacular empowerment

1910 appears to have shaped mission in the global church, especially its impact on missions movements in places like India, China through delegates like Azariah and Cheng and its impact in Africa on social concerns through respondents to Edinburgh 1910 like John Chilembwe (7) in Malawi. However, despite the way in which mission movements were starting to emerge in this period, in the countries mentioned above and in places like Korea (Park, 1991) and Mizoram (Nengzakhp, 2000), it would take much longer for the global church to be fully conscious of this diversity.

2) 1963 – the WCC Mission Conference

For Robert, the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches in Mexico City, with its theme of ‘Missions in Six Continents’ was a turning point as evidenced by its final written statement: “We therefore affirm that this missionary movement now involves Christians in all six continents and in all lands. It must be the common witness of the whole Church, bringing the whole Gospel to the whole world.” (Quoted in Robert 2010, 8)

The realization that mission involved the church across the world and its implications had taken time to be formulated. It reflected a new moment in history after the travails of the 20th century:

“This statement, in a nutshell, reflected fifty years of missiological developments set into motion by Edinburgh 1910. In retrospect, we see that it marked the symbolic beginning of a postcolonial framework for the liberation of mission from captivity to western Christendom, and growth into mutuality. The articulation of a united world community—as opposed to western-dominated Christianity - emerged from struggles for Christian solidarity under the horrific conditions of the Second World War.’ (Robert 2010, 8)

If the 1960s saw the emergence of a new understanding of mission it would take some time for this to be worked out in practice. The Christian and Mission Alliance and the CIM/OMF both went through processes of internationalisation in the early-mid 1960s and many other agencies have been working through the implications of becoming international in substance as well as in name.

“The idea of “witness to six continents,” therefore, was a breakthrough in mission identity appropriate to a post-Christendom, post-geographic, global context. Henceforth missions should be multi-directional. They must include concern for God’s work in the world and the eventual coming of God’s reign.” (Robert 2010, 9)

Missions in the 21st century needs to reflect the many centres and the many directions that mission must take to continue the work of sharing the Christian gospel to every corner of the globe.

3) 2010 – a new conference in Edinburgh one hundred years later
Speaking at the conference and reflecting on the vision of the church as ‘a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages’ in Revelation 7: 9-10 Robert writes:

“In 2010, the biblical promises take on renewed meaning for united Christian witness. During the lifetimes of the people gathered in this room, Christianity has undergone one of the biggest changes in its two thousand year history. It is now a multicultural faith, with believers drawn



from every inhabited continent. Today we rejoice in God’s global mission as we gather to celebrate this moment in history!” (Robert 2010, 2)

Globalization and five challenges

However, this new scenario presents us with many issues that we need to address. Robert concludes her reflections at Edinburgh 2010 with five challenges that the global church needs to face in the coming years (quotes from Robert, 2010 13-15):

1) The global church is a more plural and complex matter than we have appreciated and the diversity of the various 2010 events suggest that “The essence of worldwide Christian community is being re-imagined as a more inclusive and broader “global conversation” than was possible in the past.”

2) The church faces a growing concern for the planet and its problems “is shaping how we interpret the idea of “the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world.”

3) We need to come to terms with globalization and its relation to mission.

“Globalization stimulates migration as mission, the spread of world religions and the reinterpretation of local religions beyond their traditional borders, high levels of interdependent exploitation between wealth and poverty, and the proliferation of new forms of mission such as international non-governmental organizations (INGO’s) and short-term mission trips.” (Robert 2010, 14-15)

Robert concludes with an emphasis on the need to process globalization and to be ready to critique its impact on mission: “Globalization forces us to conceptualize missions beyond the boundaries of the nation state, and both to strategize and critique new forms.”

4) Mission includes an essential concern for world evangelization that results in patterns of discipleship – “We must not allow difficult theological, socio-cultural, and political issues, or disagreements over theologies of religion, to discourage us from sharing God’s love and salvation through Jesus Christ with all the world.”

5) We must engage in mission looking forward in patience and trust to the promises in Revelation 22 and like many precedes-

sors in mission who faced spiritual and social difficulties "...we must proceed in assurance that despite all odds, our united witness across multiple human boundaries makes a difference in the world."

This is an extremely succinct and meaningful summary of the challenges that we face. Dana Robert has given a thoughtful historical review, noting particularly non-western involvement in mission since Edinburgh 2010 and connecting the task of mission with biblical passages that look forward to the vision of a church that is truly representative of peoples across the globe: she conveys a clear sense of what has already been accomplished in mission in history, the trials and travails involved, and the sense of hope that motivates Christians as we participate in God's sovereign purposes towards what remains to be done.

References

Robert, Dana. 2010. " 'Witnessing to Christ Today': Mission and Unity in the 'Long View' from 1910 to the 21st Century." Unpublished Conference Paper from the Edinburgh 2010 Conference, June 2010. At <<http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/resources/papersdocuments.html>> accessed 27th December 2010.

Neghzakup, S. 2000. *The Presbyterian Church of Mizoram's Amazing Mizo Missions*. Bangalore: SAIACS.

Park, Timothy. K. 1991. 'A two-thirds world mission on the move: the missionary movement of the Presbyterian Church in Korea.' Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Fuller School of World Mission.

PROF. DANA L. ROBERT ON MISSION

Edinburgh 2010

Dana Robert: On Edinburgh 2010 [Videos]

<http://www.youtube.com/user/2010Edinburgh> - follow links to Robert's six Videos;

[Videos on Edinburgh 2010 are found at <http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/resources/videos.html>]

Dana Robert: Plenary Lecture - Edinburgh 2010 [Article]

<http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/resources/papersdocuments.html>

'Witnessing to Christ Today': Mission and Unity in the 'Long View' from 1910 to the 21st Century - by Dana Robert

2010 Boston

Dana Robert: Introduction to 2010Boston [Video]

Dana Robert: 1st Keynote Lecture 2010Boston [Video]

<http://www.2010boston.org/> - follow links; see also other Videos at this Conference.

Biography/Bibliography

Center for Global Christianity and Mission (at the University of Boston with co-director Prof. M.L. Daneel)

<http://www.bu.edu/cgcm/> - follow links

<http://www.bu.edu/cgcm/scholars-students/dana-l-robert/>

http://www.kycouncilofchurches.org/AnnualAssembly/2010/Dana_Robert.html

http://www.amazon.com/Dana-L.-Robert/e/B0034Q3LUS/ref=ntt_dp_epwbk_0

Articles (selected)

Robert, Dana L. 'Shifting Southward: Global Christianity Since 1945.' *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. Vol.24. (2), April 2000: 50-53.

Robert, Dana L. 'The First Globalization: The Internationalization of the Protestant Missionary Movement Between the World Wars.' *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*. Vol 26 (2) April 2002: 50-67.

Robert, Dana. "Friendship and Mission" *IBMR* April 2011

Robert, Dana. "Changing Definitions of Frontiers" (1&2) *Missiology on-line* April 2011 / July 2011

Robert, Dana L. and M. L. Daneel. 'Worship among Apostles and Zionists in Southern Africa, Zimbabwe.' In *Christian Worship Worldwide*. Ed. C. Farhadian, 43-70. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007.

Books on Mission (selected)

Robert, Dana L. *Christian Mission: how Christianity became a World Religion*. Chichester, U.K; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

Robert, Dana L. (ed.) *Converting Colonialism: Visions and Realities in Mission History, 1706-1914*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008.

Dana L. Robert. *Joy to the World! : Mission in the Age of Global Christianity*. (A Mission Study for 2010 and 2011.) New York: Women's Division, General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 2010.

[Link to interview about the Book <http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umw/news/articles/item/index.cfm?id=169>]

Robert, Dana L.(ed.) *Gospel Bearers, Gender Barriers : Missionary Women in the Twentieth Century*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2002.

Robert, Dana L. *American Women in Mission: a Social History of their Thought and Practice*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996.

MRC 2010 – IN REVIEW

In October 2010, missiologists from within OMF, together with theological educators from various Bible Colleges in Singapore, gathered for the triennial Missions Research Consultation at OMF-IHQ. Although fewer in number compared to previous consultations, those in attendance contributed a great deal, generating high quality presentations and discussions.

Spirituality in mission, the role of the Holy Spirit in Trinitarian mission, Christian spirituality, and the spirit worlds of Asia were among the topics explored at this conference.

With stimulating case study videos supplementing the plenary lectures, group discussions and individual reflection time, the reality of the spirit world was not forgotten during the week. By the end of the consultation several areas for future reflection had been identified:

The need to better prepare new workers for encounters with the spirit worlds of Asia.

Greater understanding of the consequences of spirit worship on the lives of those who partake in such practices.

The need for further member development and education:

To establish a better understanding of the relationship between their spirituality, and the spirituality of those they are trying to reach.

Vocabulary a worker understands may be understood differently in the context of an alternative spirituality.

The pastoral responses to demonization and other demonic interactions with the world should be better understood.

The upcoming issues of the MRT will address many of these issues, elaborating on the plenary lectures and responses from the MRC.

GETTING PUBLISHED

A highlight of the week for many in attendance was the “getting published” evening. This event brought together publishers, editors and published authors to share their experiences in book publishing. The importance of a book proposal, finding the correct publisher and the process of taking a manuscript from an idea to a completed draft were just some of the topics discussed. The panel style discussion that concluded the evening provided further inspiration for those in attendance.

As we would like to see more members serving in the fields pen their experiences to paper and reach wider audiences as published authors, we will be making the talks from this evening available as a DVD and booklet. Stay tuned for more details on when this will be available!!

We would like to thank Christina Lim (Armour Publishing), Clare Cox, Mary Tay, Einar and Annelies Wilder-Smith (authors of *Grasping Heaven*) and Rose Dowsett for their presentations, and Allan Harkness for his emceeing the evening.



Richard Konieczny, Bishop Robert Solomon and Warren Beattie taking questions from MRC participants.



RECENT PUBLICATIONS



MRT Issue 13 (Vol. 6 No. 2) is out now!

In this issue:

Roger Senior and Marilyn Schlitt reflect on practical models of spirituality for missionaries.

Patrick Fung and Les Taylor explore John Sung's identity and ministry with a particular focus on a spirituality that has been highlighted by various Asian church leaders.

George Capaque provides a detailed look at Filipino spirituality as an example of South-East Asian spirituality.

Contact your field office, home office or the Mission Research Department to receive your copy.

Develop as a Writer

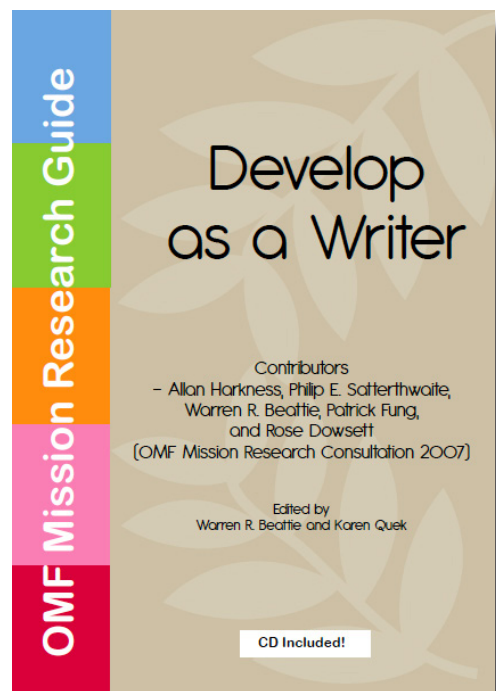
Booklet and DVD comprise a compilation of talks presented at the 2nd Mission Research Consultation, aimed at encouraging theologians and those in ministry to develop their writing skills.

Topics include:

- ~ Writing for an Academic Journal
- ~ Writing for the Chinese-Speaking World
- ~ Getting into Print

Contributors include Allan Harkness, Philip Satterthwaite, Warren Beattie, Patrick Fung and Rose Dowsett.

Develop as a Writer is available now. Contact the Mission Research Department for more information.



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To celebrate and reflect upon the centenary of the World Missionary Conference, which was held in Edinburgh in 1910, a series of international mission conferences were organized throughout 2010. With each of these conferences now over, it is the wider communities chance to hear and see the events and talks that took place. Plenary talks, Q&A sessions and personal testimonies are available from the respective websites, with some sites also encouraging viewer feedback and discussion.

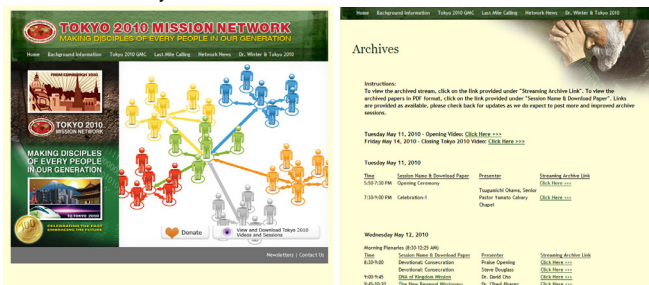
TOKYO 2010

The first international conference was held in Tokyo, Japan in June. This meeting was attended by 1200 delegates, representing 100 nations, a large proportion of which came from Africa. Nigeria alone sent 50 delegates - in stark contrast to the meeting of 1910 where there was not a single delegate from Africa.

In attendance was OMF member and theological educator Dr Chua How Chuang, "The [mission statement] 'Making Disciples of Every People in Our Generation,' tellingly sought to correct the erroneous notion that mission is little more than preaching the gospel and planting churches."

Twelve plenary papers were presented at Tokyo 2010 and these were supplemented with workshops, seminars and taskforce workshops.

Visit the Tokyo2010 website at:



Some lectures that are of particular interest are:

- * Rev. Gbile Akanni of Living Seed Team in Gboko, Nigeria - "Making Disciples: A Way Forward in Mission"
- * Dr. Enoch Wan - "Global Peoples and Diaspora Missiology"
- * Rev. Stefan Gustavsson on Reaching the Secular Peoples of Europe

These and other videos can be viewed at the following address:

<http://www.tokyo2010.org/resources/archives.htm>

EDINBURGH 2010

The second international gathering was held in Edinburgh, Scotland. This conference, held in June, focused on nine main study themes which had been deliberated on since 2008 by smaller study groups. The conference was conducted as a polycentric consultation where a number of smaller meetings were held in parallel, in different locations worldwide. At each meeting, the results of these study groups were presented.

Conference Papers and Videos (as well as Photos and Books) can be found at the Introductory page :

<http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/resources.html>

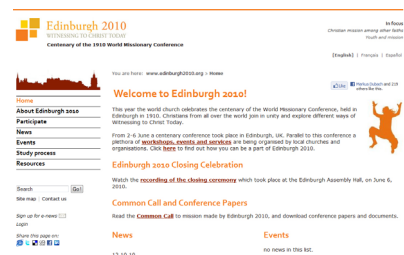
Of particular interest are two short videos by Kirsteen Kim – A view of Edinburgh 2010 today; these offer a good introduction to Edinburgh 2010 and to mission in the contemporary world.

A more complete set of videos has been uploaded on youtube and can be viewed at:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/2010Edinburgh>

Browse the videos, and keep an eye out for these recommendations:

- * Dana Robert's six short video clips on Edinburgh 2010 (Differences, Education, Women, Money, Conversion, and Earth)
- * Vinoth Ramachandra's review of Edinburgh 2010
- * Rose Dowsett shares in the collective reading of the 'Common Call' – Edinburgh 2010 Common Call.



Documentary versions of these, and other papers, can be found at:

<http://www.edinburgh2010.org/en/resources/papersdocuments.html>

CAPE TOWN 2010

The third, and largest conference (with over 4000 delegates in attendance) to be held in 2010 was the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization. This was held in Cape Town, South Africa in October. With plenary talks from prominent leaders in theological education and missiology, the conference covered a wide range of topics - from the missiological trends of Urban Mission and Diaspora, to sociological issues such as poverty, wealth and globalization. The official website of Cape Town 2010, provides a valuable update on trends and opinions that drive missions in 2010.

Visit the Lausanne homepage here:

<http://www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010>



Browse and stream videos from the Schedule at this link:
<http://www.lausanne.org/cape-town-2010/schedule.html>

Here are a few selections that should stimulate further interest:

- * Turning points: church and mission – Part 1 and 2
- * A fresh approach to witness - Bold Proclamation - Archbishop Kwashi
- * People at work – Presentation 1 - Mark Greene
- * Global Issues – Globalization: the challenge – Os Guinness
- * Integrity Confronting Idols - Chris Wright
- * Partnership - Equilibrium vs. Diversity in Unity - Patrick Fung
- * Scripture in Mission – Fergus McDonald

The topical index to videos can be found at
<http://conversation.lausanne.org/en>

You can find written versions by going to
<http://conversation.lausanne.org/en/resources>

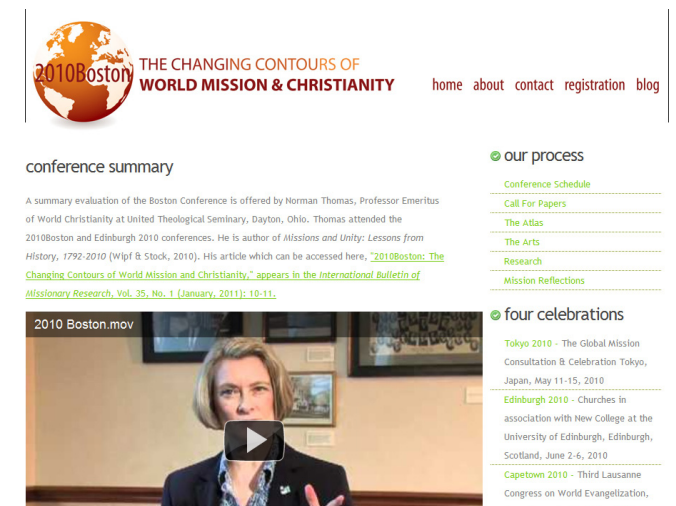
The recently edited version of the Cape Town Commitment now revised after the Consultation is found at
<http://www.lausanne.org/ctcommitment>.

BOSTON 2010

The final conference was held in Boston, USA and aimed at reflecting upon and summarising the lessons learned in each of the previous “Edinburgh style” conferences. With a theme titled “The Changing Contours of World Mission and Christianity” Boston 2010 was attended by theological educators and students from within Boston and featured plenary talks from prominent leaders such as Dana Roberts and others from the Boston area.

Plenary talks and other resources from Boston 2010 can be found at the official website:

<http://www.2010boston.org/>



View lectures of the following conference speakers at the Boston2010 website:

- Dr. Dana Robert: Boston, Students, and Missions from 1810 to 2010
- Dr Brian Stanley: Discerning the Future of World Christianity: Vision and Blindness at the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh 1910
- Dr. Athanasios N. Papanasiou: Journey to the Center of Gravity: Christian Mission one century after Edinburgh 1910
- Dr Peter C Phan: Christianity and the Wider Ecumenism: ‘Mission and Intra-religious Dialogue: Edinburgh, Vatican II, and Beyond.

Additional recommended videos by conference speakers Ruth Padilla Borst (1) and Archbishop John Sentamu (2) can be found at:

- (1) <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/10956891>
- (2) <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/10861552>

