REPORTS ON RESEARCH PROJECTS

One of the evenings of the Conference was devoted to reports on various research projects undertaken by missiological institutes or study centers. Since there were many reports submitted to the organizing committee, choices had to be made for presentation to the assembly, but the editor of Mission Studies announced that the journal would publish any reports that would be submitted. What follows are the reports that the editor has received.

GOSPEL AND CULTURES RESEARCH PROJECT (University of Helsinki, Finland, Faculty of Theology)

Prof. Dr. Miikka Ruokanen (Professor of Dogmatics) leads the research project on GOSPEL AND CULTURES, financed by the Academy of Finland. The project has Academy funding for three years, 1998-2000. In addition to this, the members of the project receive many personal scholarships from various funding organizations. Presently, the GOSPEL AND CULTURES research project employs six full-time doctoral students. Besides, there is a large number of those who are doing their research on short-term basis, so that the total number of the personnel in the project is twenty. Since 1997 the members of the project have already published three monographs, two doctoral dissertations and a large number of articles in the field in question.

The aim of the GOSPEL AND CULTURES research project is to analyze global changes in Christianity. The majority of Christians already live in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Theological influence from the South to the North is increasing as well. Problems of contextualization and dialogue are becoming ever more an urgent agenda in theological research. The project will study how Christianity is being understood in terms of the world view, life patterns, habits, language and symbols of each local culture, and what is the self-understanding of Christianity when facing other religions. GOSPEL AND CULTURES aims at the critical analysis of various methods used for contextualization and dialogue in different parts of the world. This also means a contribution to creating more appropriate models and means of methodology. In the very near future, the project will especially concentrate on Asia, even more specifically on investigating the relation between Christianity and Chinese culture.

Mission Studies, Vol. XVI, 1-2, 2000
The GOSPEL AND CULTURES project is a joint project of the Department of Systematic Theology and the Department of Asian and African studies of the University of Helsinki, and of the Department of Systematic Theology of Åbo Akademi. The project has close ties with leading international authorities and institutes in the field.

Professor Miika Ruokanen
miikka.ruokanen@helsinki.fi

MISSIONARY TRAINING PROJECT AT TAMALE INSTITUTE OF CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES (TICCS), TAMALE, GHANA

“Cultural Dimensions of Kenosis in Missionary Spirituality and Training”: A One-Year Program in Cross-Cultural Field Education in Ghana––“Learning How to Leave”

Participants learn: a language; a culture; cultural analysis for ministry; interpretation from an insider’s perspective; application to a specific ministry; initiation of a specific ministry; evaluation of a ministerial project

By means of: lectures, village immersion, supervision, readings under supervision, essay writing.

For further information please contact John P. Kirby, SVD, Tamale Institute of Cross Cultural Studies, 1012 Tamale, Ghana, West Africa. E-mail: ticcs@africaonline.com.gh. Webpage: www.ticcs.com.

INSTITUTE OF MISSIONOLOGY
MISSIO E.V.--AACHEN, GERMANY

1. Globalization and Religious Experiences

Since 1998 the Institute of Missiology Missio e.V. in Aachen, Germany has been managing a long-term project on “Globalization” with the working title: “Religious experiences in the context of capitalist globalization: Affirmation of life from the perspective of the ‘victims’.” In this project, about twenty scholars, mainly from Latin America and Europe, have been involved, but also testimonies from different religious subjects like