

Editorial

To affirm that Missiology happens at the crossroads, border-gates, or simply at the borders, can be interpreted as a negative statement - born out of a crisis. This is understandable. When popular media reports on matters related to people at the crossroads or at the borders - people on the move, in particular as refugees or migrants, then it strengthens this interpretation. Indeed, when xenophobia explodes into the streets or when communities hunt the outsider down, it spills over into the images and stories shared – or better, sold.

However, there is another perspective. Crossroads and borders are also meeting points. These meeting points indeed carry within itself the ambiguity of our humanness. It was, amongst others, Steven Bantu Biko, who indicated that despite his bitter critique of the missionaries, ironically that it was they who first related to black Africans in a humane way. In this ambiguity, for some the border is indeed an end, a crisis; for others however it presents the possibility for new beginnings. For many, despite the crisis, and the struggles at transcending it, these are also spaces that glimmer with glimpses of humanity at its best. Perhaps these are glimpses of the divine, of hope. As a scholarly journal from the Southern African context, we consciously intend to be reminded of both our grim reality, of the endings, but also the glimpses of hope.

It is in the context of these tensions that Missiology happens. It is therefore not surprising that Missiology often bears within itself this tension. Its own history carries within itself the crisis of its relation to colonialism and the many expressions of imperialism. This continues to be a challenge for us. You will find many of the articles in this edition of *Missionalia*, which not only tells the story, but analyse it at a deep (often uncomfortable!) level. The critical, scholarly reflections on the history and current praxis of the missionary endeavours of religious movements, in particular the Christian movement in Southern Africa, as it happened at the crossroads with race and culture, economic and environmental realities remain crucial in executing this task. However, the authors in this edition also went further. Missiology also have a creative task. In this respect, we are also tasked to delve deep into the basic sources from these movements, in order to unearth layers of hope-filled traditions, experiences, but also ideas that open up new perspectives. In this respect then, one can speak of Missiology as a meeting point. This is a meeting point of different paradigms, contexts, but also methodological choices. In this edition, you will notice that some of the authors come from disciplines other than Missiology like Practical Theology and Public Theology; another meeting

point is that these authors represent different generations and most certainly in the future, from different genders.

This last point (or confession) speaks to the reality that we have not yet reached our destination. This is a long journey with ourselves and the truth is that as we allow these meetings to happen, we all are being changed - these meetings (we discover) are indeed transformative encounters. This is the kind of contours that Nico Botha draws for a theology of migration. He also illustrates this with some fresh stories of how this could happen. The article of Thias Kgatla continues in working out the bitter impact but also implications of a particular mission, but also migration history in South African mission history. This is also the texture of the article by Willem Saayman, as he engages mission as theological education, through a specific case study of ecumenical collaboration between the University of South Africa (Unisa) and the Gesellschaft für Bildung und Forschung (GBFE) in Germany. He suggests that this dimension of mission might be critical for our time. In a sense the article of Vuyani Vellem from the Centre of Public Theology at the University of Pretoria, also engages a particular dimension of mission history. He however uses a particular lens, which presents the article from Elijah Baloyi with very relevant perspectives on the intersection between faith, race and culture. The new perspectives from John Klaasen also guide and challenge Missiology in our engagement with Development Studies and Economics.

In this edition we are also excited to present the article from the emerging track in SAMS. The last few years SAMS have consciously provided meeting space for younger, emerging scholars at our Annual Congress. The article of Carl Brook is the first from this cohort and hopefully the first of many. Being sensitive to particular history and context, he creatively explores how church, in new guises, as a monastic community, can continue to be an alternative, yet subversive meeting place. He reminds us of Rasmussen's notion of the church as "community of the cross" who like Jesus, moves, migrates to "the abandoned places of the forgotten, powerless, exiled or poor." This journey is indeed a crossroad in many ways.

The season of Lent and Easter remind us again, also as scholarly community to affirm ourselves as being migrants on the move, on these crossroads. As scholars and dialogue partners in Missiology, we cannot deny how far we've come, but we haven't arrived yet. May you, through this edition of *Missionalia*, be moved.

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