



## From Trondheim to Lyon CEC Activity Report to the 13<sup>th</sup> Assembly

### *Chapter II:* Churches in Dialogue Commission Report

Taking into consideration the work done by the former Churches in Dialogue Commission (CiD) and the Trondheim documents, the CEC Central Committee decided, at its meeting in Geneva in December 2003, to establish a new CiD and adopted some concrete recommendations for its work in the field of theological studies.

According to its mandate, this Commission was not a study commission in the narrow sense, which would have prepared ecumenical texts and presented them to the churches for reception; it rather initiated and supported a variety of bilateral and multilateral encounters and dialogues, with a special emphasis given to theological reflection on the various challenges. The *Charta Oecumenica* was to be used as a basis in all areas of study and dialogue.

The Commission carried out its work at annual plenary meetings, and in between through consultations and working groups, as well as through communication with various research institutes and other ecumenical organisations. The meetings were organised in different parts of Europe in order to come in contact with different church traditions: 2004 Aarhus, Denmark; 2005 Cartigny, Switzerland; 2006 Tallinn, Estonia; 2007 Volos, Greece; and 2008 Pullach, Germany. The prayer programme at each meeting was organised according to the main church tradition in the respective place. Annual meetings of the CiD were first of all dealing with its ongoing agenda and focussed each time on a specific topic. Several consultations were organised in connection with the annual meetings to which additional participants were invited. Members of the CiD were distributed to different working groups alongside the agenda items. An important concern for CiD was to develop a constructive cooperation with different Ecumenical partners: World Council of Churches (Commission on Faith and Order and the department for Ecumenical Theological Education); Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (Leuenberg Church Fellowship – CPCE<sup>1</sup>); The National Councils of Churches in Europe; The Faculty of Catholic Theology of the University Graz, Austria; The Institute for Evangelical Ascetic (*Institut für evangelische Aszetik*) from Neuendettelsau, Germany. Furthermore CiD coordinated jointly with CCEE the work of the CEC-CCEE Committee for Relations with Muslims in Europe and organised the forum on Unity at the 3<sup>rd</sup> European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu, Romania (September 2007).

The main working priorities of CiD were:

## **1. Relations between the Orthodox churches and other member churches of CEC**

The report of the Policy Reference Committee at the CEC Assembly in Trondheim recommended among others that “special consideration should be given to intensify the process of clarification between Orthodox and other member churches”. In this respect CiD organised first a small consultation in the frame of its meeting in Tallinn, Estonia, from 8-12 June 2005. As an introduction to this consultation Prof. Dr Risto Saarinen from the Theological Faculty of the University of Helsinki made a presentation on the “Evaluation of the ongoing theological dialogues between the Eastern Orthodox Churches and the Churches of Reformation”. A second presentation was on “Finland as a Case study of good practice in any dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Church”, presentation by Rev. Dr Matti Repo, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland.

The discussion on these topics underlined the importance of integrating doctrine and practice (academically and ecclesially). This integration is discovered in the mission practice of the church. Furthermore the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach to dialogue, moving it beyond the scope of merely the dogmatic or systematic theologian. Proper attention to the processes of reception was considered important. It was further considered that if CEC is to be seen as an effective contributor to the processes of dialogue, it must be prepared to take a more proactive approach to publication at both popular and academic levels. In the light of these reflections CiD organised further the following consultations:

### **1.1 The consultation process between Orthodox and Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) representatives**

CiD organised already in 2002 a **first consultation** between representatives of these two groups of churches on ecclesiology, from which the participants strongly recommended the continuation of this consultation process. The **second CPCE-Orthodox consultation** took place from 25-27 June 2004, at Lutherstadt-Wittenberg. 10 participants came from different Orthodox Churches and other 10 from CPCE member churches. From the Orthodox perspective Prof. Dr Grigorios Larentzakis/Graz presented the main paper on *The One Church and Its Unity*. Prof. Dr Marksches/Berlin responded from the perspective of the Ecclesiology of the Reformation.

The common statement adopted at the Wittenberg consultation underlined as an important common view that “Ecclesiology can only be dealt with properly within the context of the doctrine of the trinity, the context of christology, pneumatology, soteriology and theological anthropology. Ignoring any one of these perspectives leads inevitably to reductions”. This common statement made further some important remarks regarding the church local and the church universal, as well as about the relationship between these two views on the church. In this sense “the universal church is not compiled of incomplete part-churches, but exists as a community of equally valid local churches, without any overriding importance or subordination of any of these churches”.

Agreement was achieved also in relation to the four attributes of the church: oneness, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity, but some differences appeared by the closer consideration of these attributes. “The understanding of the holiness of the church, especially against the background of the Reformation perspective that the church as the people of God can also be called a sinner, led to a longer discussion. According to the Orthodox opinion the church as the body of Christ cannot sin. In the understanding that the holiness of the church is a gift of God to human beings, who confess their sins in every worship service, basic common features emerged. For the Protestant churches the confession of the holiness of the church is the main statement, and at the same time, with the reference to the fallibility and the need of forgiveness for the church they want to express that the church cannot be identified with the eschatological Kingdom of God”.

For the further work in this consultation process the Wittenberg encounter recommended the clarification of the attribute of apostolicity “especially the question of different forms of the apostolic succession and the relationship between Holy Scripture and Tradition as well as the authority of the Councils of the early church”. Another question to be further considered by this group was “how far the understanding of unity in the Leuenberg Agreement can be a model for the unity between churches of the Reformation and Orthodox churches”. This very legitimate question which preoccupied mainly the evangelical participants indicated from the beginning one of the directions to be followed in this consultation process. The Leuenberg church fellowship was a result of a long and deep theological dialogue and therefore the concept of unity on which this fellowship was built upon was to be tested also in dialogue with the Orthodox churches. The continuation of this consultation process may clarify more concretely where this question could lead the dialogue between these two theological traditions.

The **third consultation** between Eastern Orthodox theologians and theologians representing the CPCE took place from 27 - 30 April 2006 at Phanar/Istanbul, the See of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The theme of the meeting in Istanbul was “Catholicity and the Unity of the Church” as well as “Baptism”. Two papers were presented on each one of these issues from either side. At the end of the meeting a common statement was adopted. Prof. Risto Saarinen presented a paper on “Unity and Catholicity of the Church” from a Protestant perspective, followed by a presentation on “Identity as Communion. Building blocks of Orthodox Ecclesiology” by Prof. Konstantinos Delikostantis. On the second theme Dr Hans-Peter Grosshans presented a paper on “Baptism – A Sacramental Bond of Church Unity” from the Protestant side and Prof. Grigorios Larentzakis on “Baptism and the Unity of the Churches. Orthodox Aspects.”

In relation to the first issue “it was clarified that ‘catholicity’ cannot be separated from ‘oneness, apostolicity and holiness’ of the church. It turned out as common conviction that the relationship between unity and catholicity has to be found in the local church. Each local church is ‘catholic’, whereby the term ‘catholic’ expresses a dimension that goes beyond the locally visible life of the community. Catholicity is fully manifested through communion in the eucharist with other local churches. ‘Catholic’ does not just mean ‘universal’, but implies a qualitative dimension, which defines Christian identity”. With these remarks the statement underlines that the connection between the local churches is guaranteed by means of synodality. “In both traditions

catholicity is among other things experienced in the liturgical life, which is celebrated in continuity with the early church. There was agreement that catholicity and nationalism exclude each other while the diversity in culture, language and nation, in which the same faith is being expressed, is not contradictory to the catholicity of the church”.

As for baptism “both sides agree on the fact that baptism with water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit cannot be repeated. It presupposes true faith of the church as well as of the individual candidate. Furthermore, baptism takes place in a particular local church, but it also brings about a catholic dimension. In both traditions the term ‘mysterion’ seems appropriate to describe the reality of baptism, which effects - through the Holy Spirit - cleansing from sin, rebirth, incorporation into the body of Christ and adoption as a child of God”. The participants at this consultation recognised that “the pastoral challenges in relation to the baptism of children from interconfessional marriages as well as the confessional identity of godparents, have increasing weight”. Still in relation with baptism the Istanbul consultation underlined that “There was a consensus with regard to essential elements of the celebration of baptism. This point requires further study. In both traditions the baptism is ordinarily administered by an ordained person. All these issues require further study in the perspective of a possible mutual recognition of baptism”.

On 28 April all participants in the Orthodox-CPCE consultation were received by His All-Holiness the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, who underlined “the importance of ecumenical dialogue and theological encounters despite existing obstacles”. The participants recommend to CEC and CPCE “that this consultation process continue, because it was felt that Christian churches in Europe are in need of common reflection on central theological topics”. The Istanbul consultation marked a new milestone in the partnership between CEC and CPCE by strengthening the cooperation between the Orthodox churches and the churches of Reformation in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

The **fourth Eastern Orthodox-CPCE Consultation** took place in Vienna from 30 October to 1 November 2008 on the topic “Baptism in the life of our churches.” The final statement adopted at this consultation indicated that “it was possible to work out the essential elements of the administration of Baptism in greater detail: creed, baptismal questions, renunciation of evil, commitment to a life in accordance with the baptismal promises, and the blessing.” The statement underlined further that “the rich diversity of liturgical forms is not church divisive; it can be enriching.” At this consultation it was recognised that there are some “differences between the traditions” in relation to the Baptism, nevertheless, “it is notable that, just as, on the one hand, Baptism, Chrismation and Eucharist belong together so, on the other hand, there is a link between Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion.”

As a practical outcome the Vienna statement underlined that “in both traditions there are good arguments in favour of the mutual recognition of Baptism. Regardless of all the remaining differences we recommend to our churches to initiate steps towards the mutual recognition of Baptism where this is not yet the case.” The statement mentioned finally that “in view of the existing differences we realise that fundamental agreement on Baptism and its mutual recognition will have ecclesiological consequences that will require further study. Closer rapprochement is needed, for instance, between the different understandings of Chrismation and confirmation.” The

participants at the Vienna consultation recommended to both CEC and CPCE the continuation of this consultation process.

## 1.2 The Eastern Orthodox - Porvoo Consultation Process

“We considered some of the fundamental aspects of communion as encountered in the Orthodox churches and the Porvoo Common Statement<sup>3</sup>. We also examined ways in which the true Church is recognised along with the limits of diversity within the unity of the Church. We noted that further work on unity and diversity, and on the unity of the Church, is required in the light of the common challenges to Christian witness in contemporary Europe”. These remarks are part of the final common statement adopted at the **first consultation on the Porvoo Common Statement**, organised by CiD from 1 - 4 December 2005 at *Kirkon koulutuskeskus*, Järvenpää in Finland.

The papers presented focused on the following topics: “Anglican-Orthodox dialogue” (The Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Mircea Ielciu, Romanian Orthodox Church); “Lutheran-Orthodox dialogue” (The Rev. Prof. Dr Viorel Ionita, CEC); “Lutheran-Anglican dialogue” (The Rev. Dr Matti Repo, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland), along with a General Introduction on ways in which the Porvoo churches live out their communion (The Rev. Dr Stephanie Dietrich, Church of Norway). Two other papers presented the ecclesiology of the Porvoo Common Statement from an Anglican and an Orthodox point of view (The Rt Rev. John Hind, Church of England and Ass. Prof. Ionut Tudorie, Romanian Orthodox Church respectively).

Along its ecclesiological topic this consultation underlined further that “the Church’s purpose is located within God’s redemption of the cosmos, and the Eucharist has an inescapably eschatological dimension. The Church is a divine reality which must be expressed in canonically defined forms, but cannot be wholly identified with them. The Holy Spirit is at work everywhere, even outside the boundaries of the Church”. Remaining faithful to their respective theological traditions the two partners in this consultation established through these common affirmations a solid basis for future constructive discussions.

In the light of the papers presented and the discussion which followed them, the consultation in Järvenpää identified three broad topics with the following range of issues for deeper consideration:

1. The compatibility of the understanding of the Church in the Porvoo Common Statement and the Orthodox understanding of the Church:
  - the concept of unity in the Porvoo and Orthodox traditions;
  - the true Church of Jesus Christ;
  - the image of the Church from which we start in each of our traditions;
  - unity and diversity.
2. Ministry, apostolicity and mission:
  - apostolicity in the context of unity, catholicity and holiness
  - witnessing to the Gospel;

- doctrine, theology and growth in the understanding of dogma;
  - issues of accountability in various dialogues.
3. The Holy Spirit: creation and growth inside and outside the Church:
- the spiritual life and entering into the mystery of the Trinity;
  - growth and unity in the context of conflict;
  - the canonical and the charismatic in the Church;
  - creation, Church and the whole world.

The discussion at Järvenpää showed that the understanding of the church of both the Porvoo Common Statement and the orthodox Theology underlines the significance of the Bishop's ministry. Although there are relevant differences between the two traditions in relation to this topic, the two theological traditions could still achieve a great deal of consensus in this respect. This should be one of the concrete aims of this consultation process. In this perspective, the statement adopted in Finland, recommends to the CEC "to facilitate a further consultation as a matter of urgency in order to harness and develop the theological dynamic manifested in the Järvenpää consultation".<sup>4</sup>

The **second Porvoo-Eastern Orthodox Consultation**, held from 27-30 March 2008, at the Monastery Sambata de Sus, Romania, discussed the first theme recommended in Järvenpää in the following formulation: *The compatibility of the understanding of the Church in the Porvoo Common Statement and the Orthodox understanding of the Church*. On this theme the following papers were presented: "The Nature of the Church in the Orthodox Ecclesiology" (Metropolitan Prof. Dr Gennadios of Sassima, who could not be present in person but whose paper was read by the Rev. Prof. Dr Viorel Ionita), "The true Church of Jesus Christ and the concept of the Church in the Common Statement understanding" (the Rev. Prof. Dr Samuel Rubenson), "Can Christian Unity be attained? Reflections on Church unity from the Orthodox perspective" (the Rev. Prof. Dr Vaclav Jezek), and "The concept of church unity in the Porvoo Common Statement. Unity and diversity" (Rt. Rev. Michael Jackson, Bishop of Clogher).

The final statement adopted at this consultation indicated that besides the many points of common view on the Church of Jesus Christ "various questions were raised that need further discussion, including some which bear on differences between our church traditions. In respect of diversity, there was some disagreement about what would constitute legitimate diversity in the life of the Church, and points raised in discussion included the need to account for the roots of diversity and the need to develop or apply criteria for evaluating legitimate diversity". The consultation focussed also on the understanding of the Church as well as on its unity. The final statement underlined that "the unity of the Church, as expressed in outward, visible form, would need to be able to encompass considerable diversity, but how far and in what form this is so would need more exploration".

During the discussion at the Sambata consultation it was mentioned that the Porvoo Common Statement "uses 'church' at different levels of meaning. These levels are not necessarily a sign of confusion or contradiction. Besides the classical view of the invisible Church, visibility has become an important issue in protestant ecumenical

conversation. The notion of the Church becoming visible in the biblical narrative is a charming idea. Luther taught that the church was there already before Christ, and the saints of the Old Testament can be an area of ecumenical convergence". From the Orthodox perspective "the terminology of the 'unity of the Church' is better than that of 'the unity of Christians' which places unity at a more human or social level. In this respect, 'we' in the Church doesn't necessarily refer to the Christians as individuals, but as community which stays in an unbroken continuity with 'we' from the New Testament". From the same Orthodox perspective unity cannot be completely separated from holiness, catholicity and apostolicity.

As well as the CPCE-Orthodox consultation also the Porvoo-Orthodox consultation registered some disagreement in relation to the fact that the Porvoo Common Statement is making a reference "to the Church's need for repentance", a question which should be further considered in this consultation process. Finally another area of discussion "concerned the relationship between the inner, mystical reality of the Church and the particularity of historical churches. Relevant here would be the differing accounts of history and of God's providence in history, offered by our church traditions". The participants thanked CEC for having organised this consultation and strongly recommended the continuation of this consultation process meant to promote the dialogue between the respective churches.

### **1.3 The Consultation on Dialogues between Orthodox Churches and other member churches of CEC**

Besides the ongoing consultation processes CPCE-Eastern Orthodox and respectively Porvoo-Eastern Orthodox, CiD organized a consultation to evaluate the theological dialogues between the Orthodox Churches and other member churches of CEC. This consultation took place from 23-25 June 2008 at the Seminary of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany in Pullach, near Munich. The consultation aimed to collect experiences in good practices of dialogues. Besides the bilateral dialogues within the CEC member churches, the evaluation included also some global dialogues. By including global, European and local levels in the evaluation, the wish was to have a wider perspective not only on the theological discussions but also to the different mechanism of dialogue and reception of the different dialogues at all levels of church life.

Each dialogue process was evaluated from the viewpoint of the two partners in dialogue. The evaluators prepared independently an assessment of about ten pages, paying special attention to the themes they consider as the most essential ones in their respective dialogues. The evaluators have received a list of theological topics as an orientation, but they were advised to change and create the themes so that they best served the evaluation and description of the dialogue in question. Furthermore, the evaluators were asked to assess the methodology used in the dialogues and to estimate whether it has proved to be a successful one.

In the common statement adopted at this consultation, the participants "recognized that the dialogues and the subsequent documents produced were created within a specific time and political context; the context for many of these dialogues no longer obtains for all our churches". In this respect "there is a need to clarify the aim and objectives of each dialogue. The methodology adopted should not only be consonant

with the intended aims of the dialogue but also involve a self-critical reflection about the process”. As for the evaluation of these dialogues the statement indicated that “more account must be taken than in the past of the fact that dialogue partners evaluate the respective importance of theological questions in different ways. This can cause problems of ambiguity when the statements are read by others not involved in the dialogue”.

For the continuation of this evaluation process the Pullach statement recommended the following questions for consideration:

- Do the outcomes differ if we are involved in “Conversations” rather than “Dialogues”?
- In what ways can the participating Churches improve the current process of reception?

It was further recommended that each dialogue should consider the appropriate mode of reception in their respective churches for the agreed statements. The participants of this consultation in Pullach recommend that the CEC continue this consultation process with regard of the bilateral dialogues. The Pullach consultation included more than twenty presentations on bilateral dialogue.<sup>5</sup>

The CiD is confident that through all these consultations the dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and other member churches of CEC has been considerably improved and that the concrete recommendations formulated at these consultations could facilitate a better and deeper understanding between these churches.

## **2. Our common mission in Europe**

Mission and Evangelism in Europe was the task of the Researcher in European Mission (REM), which was a consultancy established in 2004. The task of this consultancy was to:

- *Survey the whole area of current mission activity in Europe concentrating on new developments in mission and evangelism, and identifying how and where greater communication, networking and resourcing can and should be achieved at a European level, and where the co-ordinating role of CEC can be most effective.*
- *Produce a report at the end of the consultancy period, for consideration and decision by CEC and its appropriate partner organisations.*

The Researcher was based in Budapest, Hungary, because it was centrally placed within Europe, soon to enter the EU, a Central European transport hub, and there was a Mission Institute which offered a very good environment for a research programme. In retrospect the decision to locate a new CEC staff person far away from the centre and without the necessary administrative support proved not to be necessarily a good idea. The staff person appointed for this consultancy was Rev. Darrell Jackson, a Baptist minister from Great Britain, who worked with CEC from a Budapest office

from 1 February 2004 to 31 January 2007. Rev. Jackson was formally employed by the Church Mission Society (CMS) as a field Missionary but seconded to CEC. On its side, the CEC carried the main responsibility for funding this whole programme. CEC in collaboration with CMS set up a small Reference Group which advised and accompanied the REM programme. The members of the Reference Group were: Rev. Lars Björksell, Sweden; Rev. Tore Laugerud, Norway; Rev. Berit Schilde Christensen, Denmark; Rev. Andrei Eliseev, Belgium; Rev. Wout van Laar, Netherlands; Dr Anne-Marie Kool, Hungary; Rev. Dr Herbert Meissner, Germany; Mr Timothy Okroev, England and Fr. Christoph Blinn, Paris, CCEE representative.

The Researcher published two *Briefing Papers* which were electronically distributed. The first issue appeared in October 2004 and represented an initial attempt to discern the task being urged of the Researcher as well as a report of work achieved in the first three months of effective operation. The achievements of the Researcher in the first period of time were listed as follows:

- Developed research priorities for the Programme and carried out initial assessment of existing research programmes within Europe. Existing agencies include: European Values Survey, Eurostats, Operation World, Global Mapping International, World Christian Database, various national and denominational research agencies, *et al.* Few of the ‘global’ research centres have a European presence and information is frequently inaccurate.
- Implemented systems for collecting, archiving and collating research information in ‘Country’ and mission thematic ‘files’.
- Identified and implemented ‘levels’ of research and began initial collection and collation of research information via Internet and library research; Direct contact with Agencies and Churches; Consultation, conferences, and personal visits.
- Identified and implemented suitable methodologies for reporting Research and other findings to CEC member Churches and Associate Bodies as well as to others with an interest in the project;

The *Briefing Paper No.2*, published in October 2005, contained first a report on the work done since October 2004 and indicated a limitation of scope for the programme to three areas of Mission:

- Ethnic minority and Migrant congregations in Europe;
- Mission-shaped Church (or Missionary Congregation); and
- Mission and proselytism.

Additionally it outlined a method of approach to the research activity, that of a Learning Laboratory as a way of carrying out action research. Finally, it raised the need for a European consultation addressing themes that had emerged from the World Mission Conference in Athens a month earlier. This report served as a half-way marker for the three year programme and set the tone for much of what happened in the final eighteen months.

Defining the kind of ‘research’ this programme was engaged in remained an ongoing subject of discussion. Statistical, or quantitative research, did not feature significantly

in the work of the programme. The approach was far more qualitative. An approach of this kind might have involved simply observing what actors in the field of mission were doing, record it, and attempt to classify it. A second approach might have involved creating research programmes that generate new information, much as might a PhD. or a significantly funded programme. In practice the Researcher used the limited resources available to steer a middle course, initiating research in Hungary (through the missional Church project) whilst emphasizing the observation of practice in the other areas of the mission research programme.

This suggested a programme of research that was focussed on close observation of existing mission activity with a view to making recommendations that could indicate how CEC might develop a range of co-ordinating activities to address the more significant areas of mission activity at the respective time and for the foreseeable future. Arising from the period of the research programme, the Researcher published various materials.<sup>6</sup>

During the same period Rev. Darrell Jackson made a series of presentation which helped to clarify the vision towards a common mission in Europe.<sup>7</sup>

Before ending his work for the CEC at the end of January 2007, Darrell Jackson organised the Mission Consultation jointly with WCC, which took place in Budapest, Hungary, from 23-28 January 2007. The theme of this consultation “Come, Holy Spirit, heal and reconcile in Europe ... illuminate the whole of humankind with the light of Christ” underlined in its first part one of the objectives of this consultation, which was to undertake an evaluation of the impact of the World Mission Conference (Athens, May 2005) in Europe. The second part of the theme indicated the idea of preparing a contribution for the EEA3 in Sibiu. “The Letter from Budapest to the churches in Europe”, which was the final statement of that consultation, and the “Summary of consultation content and some questions”, elaborated by the Drafting Team for the final statement are self explanatory and offer a very good presentation of the consultation organised by Darrell Jackson. This consultation proved to be a very good summary of the whole work Darrell Jackson undertook during his mandate of three years with the CEC.

A very useful meeting of the Preparatory Group for the consultation organised by Darrell Jackson, as well as of the Reference Group for this post, took place also in Budapest on 29 - 30 January, just after the above mentioned consultation. Following a recommendation of this group meeting the CiD desk organised a consultation with the representatives of all sponsoring agencies for the CEC Mission Post in Geneva, from 2-3 July 2007. Representatives of WCC, WARC and LWF were also present. This consultation identified among others the general nature of the post, the context in which it should work and the issue of the understanding of Mission as well as of Mission in Unity. These recommendations were made with the prospect of appointing a successor for Rev. Darrell Jackson, a process that has resulted in the appointment from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009, of Ms Kyriaki Avtzi, from Thessaloniki, Greece, under the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarch.

### **3. Majority and minority churches**

The CEC Central Committee recommended to the CiD, at its meeting in December 2003:

- a) *to continue a process of consultation, promoting dialogue between majority and minority churches with respect to issues of mission and of common responsibility as well as theological education, leading to greater clarity about the way in which the terms “minority” and “majority” churches are used;*
- b) *to continue a close collaboration with the Church and Society Commission since human rights play a major role in the relationship between churches and the State.*

At its first meeting in Aarhus (Denmark, May 2004), the CiD proposed to organise a case study in three different countries: a) a country with orthodox majority (Greece); b) a country with protestant majority (Norway) and c) a country with a Roman-Catholic majority (Italy). This project was meant to envisage first an investigation in the respective countries and secondly a consultation to be organised with representatives from these countries. The discussion around these case studies during the second meeting of the CiD (May 2005) proved to be rather difficult mainly due to the lack of a point of reference.

The CEC does have a good experience in addressing the issue of relationship between Majority and Minority churches, e.g. through the consultation organised by the CiD on “Minority/Majority Churches in Europe - on the way to reconciliation and common mission” (Trondheim, 1996) and the consultation organised by the Church and Society Commission on “Religious Freedom. Majority and Minority Communities in their Relation to the State” (Vienna, November 2002). These consultations were organised around a specific topic, which was very relevant for the churches in Europe at that specific period of time. In this respect the respective consultations improved the cooperation between the majority and minority churches across Europe. The relationship between the Majority and Minority churches in Europe is today challenging both the churches and the CEC in a new way. One of the problematic issues all churches are still facing is the question of religious and ethnic identity. Taking all these aspects into consideration, CiD is now working on a paper defining the use of current terminology on minority/majority churches both from a theological and sociological perspective, also outlining some information on the problems encountered by either side.

#### **4. Cooperation among theological Faculties in Europe**

The Final Statement of the First Consultation of Faculties of Theology in Europe, which was held by the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Catholic Theological Faculty of Karl Franzens University in Graz, 4-7 July 2002 in Graz, emphasised that “the response from theological faculties and educational institutions of the European Christian churches, who came to Graz from almost everywhere in Europe in their ecclesiastical and confessional diversity”, was substantial and satisfying. Among the consultation’s recommendations was “that Europe-wide consultations should be convened regularly on issues of theology and theological education, every two to three years”. All the papers from this consultation, as well as

a detailed report on the conference programme, have been published in English<sup>8</sup> and German. This publication has been widely distributed throughout Europe.

The planning group for the first consultation began follow-up work in the course of 2003, and advocated that a second Europe-wide consultation of theological faculties be planned. The members of this group were: Prof. Peter Balla, Hungary; Prof. Juray Bandy, Slovakia; Rev. Arne J. Eriksen, Norway; Prof. Viorel Ionita, Romania/Switzerland; Prof. Anne Kull, Estonia; Prof. Gerhard Larcher, Graz, Prof. Grigorios Larentzakis, Graz, and Rev. Dr Günter Wasserberg, Germany.

The work of this group made it possible for a second consultation of European faculties of theology to be held from 6-9 July 2006, again in Graz. Participating were a total of 75 representatives of faculties of different theological traditions, as well as representatives of churches and ecumenical organisations, from 23 countries in all. The main theme of the second consultation of theological faculties was: “The Challenges of Theology in a Pluralistic Europe”. The aims of the consultation were to consider:

- the Bologna Process as an ecumenical challenge to new forms of cooperation; mutual recognition of academic achievement;
- the significance of confessionality in theological education for the ordained ministry;
- points of orientation for cooperation between churches and faculties of theology;
- links with various networks, such as the European Society for Theology, the European Society for Catholic Theology, Theological and Religious Education in Multicultural Europe (TRES), the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (Leuenberg Church Fellowship), conferences of Catholic and Protestant faculties, Nordic Conference of Faculties, etc.;
- the founding of an ecumenical Conference of Theological Education, Faculties and Colleges in Europe.

The opening ceremony of the consultation took place on 6 July at the Mariatrost Education Centre in Graz, with an introduction to the conference programme. It was followed by a public session in the Auditorium of the Karl Franzens University of Graz, in which representatives of the University and of the churches in Graz took part. The first keynote speaker there was Mr Ján Figel’, the EU Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture, and Multilingualism, who spoke on “The Challenges for Higher Education from the European Union Perspective and the EU responses”. In his presentation, the EU Commissioner said he was glad that “higher education and especially the Bologna Process are among the main topics at your meeting”. The speaker also stated that the numbers of theological students attending lectures in most countries had been decreasing for years. The solution to these problems, according to Ján Figel, “lies in a thorough reform of courses of study and their content. For theology in the universities this is nothing new, as you probably know better than I do. Change is part of the university since the very first ones were founded. The motto *ecclesia semper reformanda* is also valid in theology.”

The second speaker was Prof. Georg Winckler, Rector of the University of Vienna and President of the European University Association. Prof. Winckler's presentation clearly established the context for the future study of theology in European universities. It was followed by an intensive discussion of the role of faculties of theology in the state universities of Europe, which are undergoing major changes. Afterwards the audience was invited to a reception hosted by the Prime Minister of Styria in the City Castle of Graz.

On 7 July the main theme of the consultation was elaborated in three papers, given by three church leaders representing the Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox traditions respectively. The first speaker was Bishop Wolfgang Huber, Council President of the Evangelical Church in Germany, who spoke on "The Challenges of Theology in a Pluralistic Europe from an Ecumenical Perspective", in his case from a Protestant viewpoint. The second main speaker was Archbishop Alois Kothgasser from Salzburg, who spoke on "Christian Theology's Encounter with Recent Challenges in a Pluralistic Europe – the Mission and Ecumenical Orientation of Faculties of Theology", from a Catholic viewpoint. The third paper was written by H.B. Patriarch Daniel of the Romanian Orthodox Church, at that time Metropolitan of Moldova and Bucovina, Romania.

Each of these three main papers was followed by an intensive discussion, raising the issues of the relationship between the study of theology and the church governing bodies, or how the Bologna process can be carried out by the various faculties of theology in Europe; the attitude of today's theology towards ecumenism was also discussed. On 7 July, continuing on July 8, three sub-themes were discussed. The first of these was "**Core Values for Theological Faculties in Europe Responding to the Evolving Needs of Churches and Society**", with papers presented by Prof. Vladimir Fedorov (Russia), from an Orthodox viewpoint; Prof. Antonio Autiero (Italy/Germany), from a Catholic viewpoint, and the Rev. Dr Angela Shier-Jones (England), from a Methodist viewpoint. After a few questions for clarification in the plenary session, this theme was discussed in three working groups. In relation to this topic there was a great concern for promoting academic compatibility and mobility within Europe. Questions of compatibility include, among other things, the differing standards for biblical languages.

The second sub-theme was: "**Challenges of the Bologna Process for the Theological Faculties and Churches in Europe**". In the plenary session, the way this process is put into practice in various contexts was described by Prof. Ivan Dimitrov (Bulgaria), Prof. Vidar L. Haanes (Norway); Prof. Wolfgang Weirer (Graz) and Dr Bogdan Popescu (representing the European region of the World Student Christian Federation). With regard to this sub-theme, the working groups reported, among other things, that questions of mobility require transparency and uniformity, so that, for example, a person doing research for a dissertation will not be significantly hindered by additional examinations.

The third sub-theme was "**Building a Network of Faculties of Theology and Churches in Europe**". Speaking to this concern, Prof. Grigorios Larentzakis described the so-called Graz Process, which is the initiative to create a platform for cooperation among all the faculties of theology throughout Europe. Then, the following networks for cooperation among various faculties of theology were

introduced: the European Society for Theology (by Prof. Susanne Heine); the European Society for Catholic Theology (by Prof. Albert Franz); the European Forum of Orthodox Schools of Theology (by Prof. Grigorios Papathomas); the work of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe with regard to theological education (by Prof. Michael Beintker); Theological and Religious Education in Multicultural Europe (TRES) (by Prof. Erik Eynikel), and the World Conference of Associations of Theological Institutions (WOCATI) (by Prof. Petros Vassilides).

The presentations on these networks, as well as the discussion which followed, showed that these networks do not compete with one another, but rather complement one another very well. Finally it was proposed that Graz be the location of a coordinating office for the network connecting all the faculties of theology in Europe. At the conclusion of the Second Consultation of Faculties of Theology, a Final Statement was adopted, which emphasised among other things the role of theology as the bridge between society, the academic world and the Church. The statement said further: “Theology not only serves the churches and Christian communities, it also makes a vital contribution in the social and political arena, helping people to understand human nature and all of creation.”

This Consultation “engendered a justifiable pride and confidence in theology as an academic discipline. There are, however, still questions that can provoke intense discussion amongst us: the relationship between Church and Faculty, questions about what to teach and how to teach, for example, the importance of research, interdisciplinary studies, theology versus religious studies, and how the faculties and the Church understand and respond to modernity or post-modernity.” Finally, this Final Statement pointed out that progress still had to be made “to further the vision, aims, and objectives that have emerged out of the two consultations.” In this regard, it was proposed “that a permanent body be established called the Conference of Theological Education Faculties and Colleges in Europe, based at Graz.”

## **5. Spirituality and worship life at ecumenical meetings**

The issue of Spirituality is directly related to the issue of the theological dialogue between the churches, therefore, at its meeting in December 2003, the CEC Central Committee was giving “thanks to God for the spirituality each of us brings to CEC and which reflects our confessions and personalities” and recommended “that the Churches in Dialogue Commission look for ways of facilitating the deeper understanding of spirituality arising out of our confessions among the CEC Member Churches living in a more and more secularised Europe (refer to the *Charta Oecumenica*, II)”.

In relation to this recommendation, the CiD discussed several aspects of the large theme of spirituality, such as: “What is meant by spirituality? Spirituality as a global phenomenon.” At the end of this discussion the CiD recommended that:

- *concepts such as ecumenical spirituality and spiritual ecumenism should be further considered;*
- *the Commission members should share among themselves their spiritual experience in relation to the worship life within their own*

*church traditions (the prayers at the meetings of the commission should be organised in such a way that each tradition is properly expressed; one person should be responsible for the planning and organising the prayers during each CiD meeting);*

- *at its future meetings the CiD should envisage attending as a group worship in different communities and afterwards talking with the people from these congregations about their spiritual experiences.*

At its second meeting (Cartigny, Switzerland, June 2005), the CiD focussed on the issue of Ecumenical Spirituality on the basis of three papers: in Orthodox, Protestant and respectively Roman Catholic perspective. In the light of this discussion, the CiD discovered that the best way to continue its work on this topic would be to focus the discussion of spirituality to “sharing the liturgical experience”. At the same time, it was recommended that CiD should find ways of working together on this issue with institutes in Europe with experience in this field. On this basis, the CiD is planning a consultation jointly with the Institute for Evangelical Ascetic, Germany, on sharing spirituality at ecumenical gatherings.

## **6. Theology of Religion in Europe**

In relation to the request “to give some thoughts on the work of CEC in relation to the inter-religious dialogue and specifically in relation to the more evident presence of Muslims in Europe”, the CiD planned first to prepare some background material on how the different churches in Europe approach the issue of theology of religions and of inter-religious dialogue; this background material should have been taken as documentation for a substantial discussion on this issue at one of the CiD meetings.

The CiD considered that the societies in which the CEC member churches are called to mission and ministry are increasingly marked by a plurality of religions, beliefs and spiritualities. People migrating from other countries have brought their faiths and cultures with them. Beyond the visibly and culturally identifiable communities of faith, there is also now a wider plurality and fluidity of spirituality in European society. Therefore Christians at all levels – Councils of Churches, denominations, congregations and individuals – are actively engaged in relationships with adherents of other religions. These may range from formal dialogues to social or political cooperation, to personal friendships, to family relationships.

The relation to other faith communities has the potential to become a source of renewed division between the churches. The varying Christian responses to other faiths can be viewed as a church-dividing issue and a conflict of beliefs. CiD was aware that the divisions on this issue are often rooted in the deeper underlying theological divisions between the traditions and that the churches in Europe do not have a common theological basis on which to build a common theology of religions. Yet the CiD also acknowledged that it needs to have the questions on the table and address them together. The vision of the CiD is that sharing of theological approaches and resources of different Christian traditions can promote common understanding and further a process of mutual complementation and thus give new insights and energy to face this common challenge. The CiD planned to deal with this issue in order:

- to help churches respond to the common challenge of religious pluralism by sharing the available resources within the Christian heritage of each church;
- to contribute to intra-Christian dialogue on theology of religions and the encounter with people of other faiths;
- to consider seriously the challenge to combine authentic Christian commitment and witness and genuine openness to other faiths.

The goal of this enterprise was:

- to study the various theological approaches that Christian denominations bring to the issue of religious pluralism;
- to share the characteristic methods and contributions of the different Christian traditions to the challenges and possibilities raised by religious pluralism;
- to further a positive dialogue within all churches, and with fellow Christians in the ecumenical partner churches, to complement and resource the relations and dialogue with people of other faiths, beliefs and spiritualities;
- to strengthen Christians in Europe in sharing their faith with others in ways that are confident but sensitive.

A first step of the CiD in this direction was to collect and review church statements on a theology of religions. These statements were studied and a first evaluation was summarized in a statement adopted at the CiD meeting in Pullach, Germany, from 25-27 June 2008. After a short introductory part, the CiD statement on a “Theology of Religions” underlined a series of agreements in the churches’ statements as follows:

- that Theology of Religions (ThR) is one aspect of coming towards a recognition of the truth of the Gospel – and that it must not lead to watering down the clarity of the Gospel;
- that God’s saving will is universal: God wants to lead all people into fellowship with His truth;
- that the creaturely nature of human beings and their being in the image of God is the basis for respect *a priori* for all religious beliefs;
- that Jesus Christ is the centre of Christian theology and, as such, also the centre of ThR. Attempts to replace the christocentric approach of theology by a “theocentric” one are problematical;
- that ThR is trinitarian theology: it explains God’s action in relation to non-Christian religions as the action of the triune God;
- that a “pluralistic” ThR which interprets religions as different ways of coming closer to the one divine reality is unacceptable.

The CiD document identified also differing viewpoints on the following issues:

- that there is unanimous agreement on confessing the centrality of Christ, although differing views on the degree of exclusivity which is attached to this concept;

- that God's universal saving will is related to the mission of the Church in different ways. Whereas, for some, God's universal saving will implies the universal mission of the Church, others have stronger expectations of manifestations of God outside the Church;
- that there is basic agreement that the Christian churches must have an open attitude to non-Christian religions and be prepared to learn, although there is controversy about how strict the limits to this openness should be;
- whereas some emphasize the Gospel's claim to truth as expressed by the churches, others make a clear distinction between the truth of the Gospel and how it is expressed by the churches.

In the light of these discussions CiD made some recommendations for further work:

- The member churches of CEC are to be informed about this review of official church documents on ThR. They are to be requested to send the CEC additional material as well as comments on the list and on the documents it comprises;
- CEC should initiate a process of consultation on ThR between the member churches. The aims of the consultation process would be a) a generally greater awareness of the issue of a theology of religions, b) progress on the content among all those involved, and c) a joint learning process.

The implementation of these recommendations should be the task of the new CiD to be appointed after the CEC Assembly in Lyon in July 2009.

## **7. Ecumenical Formation in Europe**

In order to identify its proper role in relation to this topic, the CiD organised a small consultation with representatives of CEC, WCC, CCEE, Ecu-Learn, EYCE and Syndesmos from 14-15 June 2004 in Geneva. The exchange of information at that consultation showed that there is an increasing need for ecumenical formation for leaders and members of the churches and related networks. The participants expressed their conviction that there is not one unique methodology for ecumenical formation but some common principles which can be applied contextually and these need to be further explored in the European context.

The Geneva consultation considered further that ecumenical formation should not only be for those in positions of leadership or those who may one day become leaders. This is necessary but it is also important that all are given opportunities to catch the ecumenical vision. Although networks which deal with ecumenical formation (e.g. the Christian youth organisations) already make a significant contribution, it must also be the responsibility of the churches themselves. Churches should ensure that ecumenical formation is a recognised aspect of their own formation activities - for the laity, for those to be ordained or to hold leadership positions.

The report of this consultation underlined also the inter-generational learning which has a role to play in ecumenical formation. This is not simply the old teaching the young but a mutual process where all learn from one another and, equally importantly, learn new things together. Ecumenical formation should enable us to have a larger and more inclusive vision - of our local community, our church, our nation. It should also help us to see beyond those to our European and world context and to see how they all interact and relate. Ecumenical formation should also equip us to relate to one another with openness and respect and to work and learn together.

The 2004 consultation recommended among others that CEC should “convene periodically a meeting of networks dealing with ecumenical formation in Europe in order to set up a common agenda and to share methodologies and experiences. In this perspective, the *Charta Oecumenica* should be taken as a basis on which common guidelines on ecumenical formation can be developed.” Following these recommendations the CiD organised jointly with the programme for Ecumenical Theological Education of the WCC a seminar for young theologians from Central and Eastern Europe on the Future of Ecumenical Theological Education in Central and Eastern Europe. This seminar took place from 24-28 September 2008 at the Monastery Sambata de Sus, Romania.

During this seminar presentations were made by: Konrad Raiser (Berlin), Stefan Tobler (Sibiu), Anne Kull (Tartu), Teresa Rossi (Rome), Dietrich Werner (Geneva), Constantin Scouteris (represented by Marina Kolovopoulou, Athens), Pantelis Kalaitzidis (paper presented) and Eleni Kasselouri (Volos Academy), Dagmar Heller (Bossey), Vasile Leb (Cluj-Napoca), Antoine Arjakovsky (Lviv), Ivana Noble (Prague) and Kakhaber Kurtanidze (Georgia).

The participants in this seminar underlined in their final statement that “we are aware that ecumenism as an attitude of sincere openness and dialogue needs to find ways to go much deeper into the structures and contents of theological education. There we need to develop forms of ecumenical learning, which is more than collecting information and includes a manner of understanding and a cultivation of an ecumenical ethos, which allows learning from each other beyond our denominational traditions, encourages the development of friendship and at the same time avoids stereotypes and distorted images about the others. We recognize that together, our traditions more fruitfully reach the width and depth of Christian Faith and contribute to a missionary presence of Christian churches in contemporary societies.”

Taking their finding into considerations the participants committed “to seek platforms and create a network for mutual cooperation beyond the seminar which would allow sharing of information and resources in all theological subjects, preparing materials for teaching Ecumenics, and participation in common projects”. Concretely they recommended:

- “to build up a website for sharing materials and initiatives, including an electronic library;
- to seek support for a coordinator in our region for this network;
- to continue the appointment of a Regional Consultant for Theological Education in Eastern Europe for ETE/WCC;

- to increase financial means available for exchange of theological teachers and researchers between our institutions.”

Following these recommendations the Institute for Ecumenical Research from Sibiu has already started to build up a Network for Ecumenical Learning in Central and Eastern Europe (NELCEE). This network is planning to offer a platform of information and exchange between all theological faculties and institutes in that part of Europe.

## 8. Healing of Memories

### 8.1 General Information about the process ‘Healing of Memories’ in Romania (HoMRO)

“Healing of Memories between Churches, Religions and Cultures” is a project of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) in cooperation with their Orthodox and Protestant member churches as well as with the Roman-Catholic Archdioceses and the Greek-Catholic Great-Archdiocese in Romania. Since 2006, the Federation of Jewish Communities in Romania and the organisation of Muslims in Romania have been participating in the project together with representatives of regional minorities such as Armenians, Lipoveni, Roma, Ruthenians, Slovaks, Tartars and other minorities.

The Healing of Memories programme is designed to pick up the commitment that the Council of European Catholic Bishops’ Conferences (CCEE) and CEC formulated together in 1998, in the *Charta Oecumenica*, to extend inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue with the aim of studying and healing injuries and misunderstandings between cultures and religions that developed, and were handed down, over the centuries, especially in the “border countries” of European cultural and religious history.

HoM is a “*process of generations*” comprising the following steps:

- Joint walk through history (Part A of HoM process)
- Sharing of each other’s suffering (Part B of HoM process)
- Joint preparation of the future (Part C of HoM process)

HoM is a process that was first created in South Africa as a creative way of dealing with injuries between peoples, cultures and religions. After first using the process in Northern Ireland and Norway HoM is now being continued in Romania which is a border-country between the historic confessional and cultural spheres of East and West Rome, as well as being a country combining South-Eastern European, Christian, Jewish and Turkish-Islamic characteristics.

### 8.2 HoM – Part A of the process

In June 2004 the Presidia of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) and of the Conference of European churches (CEC) decided to start a joint project on „Healing of memories between churches, cultures and religions in

Romania“. They opened a centre for Healing of Memories in Cluj, with its own secretariat and academic assistance. CPCE was to be responsible for the administration of part A<sup>9</sup> of the process whilst CEC would assume responsibility for part B. This “second European attempt” differs from previous projects of Healing of Memories in that it contains a special part of the process designed, in an inter-disciplinary and scientific way, to work out comparisons between one’s own and the other’s different and culturally specific ways of viewing culture and religion.

A key feature of this process is that it will involve churches and religious communities on the one hand, and cultural minorities on the other, in a discussion of the comparisons between the historic identities specific to each culture. Naturally one’s own view of one’s own history, and of the history of others, will differ widely from the understandings of those of the other cultures, and is the root of many prejudices; this insight is an essential part of the study. The respective results will be published in various languages (particularly in the language of the minority cultures) and will first be made available to the faculties. These results will also provide material for possible inclusion in textbooks for schools, with the aim of reducing prejudice between churches and exposed minorities.

From 2004 to 2007 workshops were organised in 9 historic regions of Romania: these workshops culminated in inter-confessional and inter-cultural conferences. In May 2005 in Cluj for the *Region of Transylvania*; in May 2006 in Iași for the *Region of Moldova*; also in May 2006 in Suceava for the *Region of Bucovina*; in June 2006 in Timișoara for the *Region of Banat* as well as in Oradea for the *Region of Bihor*; in November 2006 in Bucharest for the *Region of Valahia* and in Constanța for the *Region of Dobrogea*; in March 2007 in Baia Mare for the *Region of Maramureș*; in November 2007 in Satu Mare and Csenger (crossing the frontier) for the *Region of Sathmar*.

Sixteen training and research institutions for theology, seven for history and two for sociology are participating in the process of HoM in Romania. A further six academic institutes are also involved. So far one hundred and fifty persons have participated in the workshops and conferences during the HoM process. To sum it up, a pan-Romanian “**International Conference on Healing of Memories in Romania**” was held in June 2007 in Bucharest.<sup>10</sup> Forty two speakers presented the history and church history of the nine historic regions of Romania for the first time in an “ecumenical version”, on the basis of the papers given at the previous regional conferences.

HoMRO was present at the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu from 4 to 9 September 2007 and organised two hearings on:

- Healing of Memories: Church and national minorities according to Charta Oecumenica 4 und 8:
- Healing of Memories: Reconciliation of the churches in Europe according to Charta Oecumenica 3

HoMRO also participated in Forum 9 on “Peace and Reconciliation in Europe”

### **8.3 Healing of Memories in Romania: Part B of the HoM process in Transylvania (*Administrative responsibility lies with CEC*)**

Based on the “Comparative history of the churches, religions and cultures in Transylvania” document which has been published in several languages, regional inter-religious and inter-cultural seminars have been organised as Part B of the process in order to promote the work of reconciliation at the grass-roots. These seminars started at the beginning of 2008 in Transylvania.

Part B of the process<sup>11</sup> first focuses on the historic region of Transylvania because the very sensitive character of its pastoral and inter-cultural section needs to be regionally oriented. The process requires great depth and concentration, and it seemed appropriate to concentrate this on a specific region. Furthermore, only in Transylvania has part A of the process progressed far enough to be able to begin with part B.<sup>12</sup> Part B of the process is planned in the two following steps:

- a) Further training of suitable priests, pastors, pastoral assistants and lay persons in “Inter-cultural communication, pastoral care and mediation”(confessionally oriented in the first part, held in church training centres, and “ecumenically mixed” in the second part). Possible locations for the courses are Cluj, Alba, Iulia, Sibiu and Blaj.

The courses will be held in the form of partnerships with other European churches.<sup>13</sup>

- b) Regional seminars on Healing of Memories under the joint moderation of priests, pastors, pastoral assistants and lay persons trained earlier in the process.

It is the aim of the seminars to promote mutual respect and ecumenical cooperation between people of different confessions, ethnic groups and cultural traditions at the local level through „deeper knowledge” of, and respect for, the cultural and historic identity of the others. Differences of tradition are not eradicated but communality of language, tradition, religion and tasks in society will be specially emphasised.

Several publications and articles have been published since the beginning of the HoM process.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The Community of Protestant Churches in Europe includes 105 Protestant churches across Europe. The basic document of this community “it is the Leuenberg Agreement of 1973 which marks the end of the over 450 years of the church division between the Lutheran and Reformed churches. On the basis of the common understanding of the Gospel, the signatory churches grant one another a pulpit and table fellowship and commit themselves to common witness and service at local, regional and European levels, and the continuing theological work”.

<sup>2</sup> The full reports of both consultations were published together: *Consultation between the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE)*, edited by Michael Beintker, Martin Friedrich and Viorel Ionita, Verlag Otto Lembeck, Frankfurt am Main, Leuenberg Documents Vol. 11, in German and English, 320 p.

<sup>3</sup> “The Porvoo Communion is a communion of churches, mostly in Northern Europe, that have signed an agreement to ‘share a common life in mission and service’. The churches that signed the agreement are The Evangelical-Lutheran Churches of Estonia, Lithuania, Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Finland and the Anglican churches of Wales, Ireland, Scotland and England. Two churches from South Europe also belong to the Porvoo Communion. They are the Lusitanian Church in Portugal and the Reformed Episcopal Church of Spain. The Evangelical Lutheran Churches of Denmark and Latvia have observer status”.

<sup>4</sup> The full report of this consultation has been published in *Reseptio* 1/2006, Helsinki, p. 1-72.

These were the publications:

<sup>5</sup> World Alliance of the Reformed Churches - Orthodox

- a) Michael Weinrich, The dialogue between the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the Orthodox Churches. Taking stock from a Reformed point of view
- b) Dorin, Oancea, The Theological Bilateral Dialogue between the Orthodox Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. An Evaluation from an Orthodox Point of View

Lutheran World Federation - Orthodox

- a) Viorel Ionita, The Lutheran World Federation - Orthodox Dialogue
- b) Risto Saarinen, The Lutheran - Orthodox Joint Commission

Anglican Communion - Eastern Orthodox

- a) Paul Avis, Anglican - Orthodox Dialogue
- b) Ioan Mircea Ielciu, Considerations on the Anglican - Orthodox Theological Dialogue

Old Catholic - Orthodox

- a) Urs von Arx, Evaluation of the Orthodox - Old Catholic Dialogue (1975-1887)
- b) Vasile Leb, The Orthodox - Old Catholic Dialogue. Estimation of the Present Stage

EKD - Ecumenical Patriarchate

- a) Radu Constantin Miron, Reflections on the EKD - Ecumenical Patriarchate Dialogue
- b) Reinhard Thöle, The Dialogues of Evangelical Church in Germany with the Orthodox Churches. A Preliminary Review

EKD - Russian Orthodox Church

- a) Andrei Eliseev, A dialogue between the EKD and the ROC. A general assessment.
- b) Reinhard Thöle, The Dialogues of Evangelical Church in Germany with the Orthodox Churches. A Preliminary Review

EKD - Romanian Orthodox Church

- a) Daniel Benga, Assessment of the Dialogue between the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Church in Germany (1979-2006)
- b) Reinhard Thöle, The Dialogues of Evangelical Church in Germany with the Orthodox Churches. A Preliminary Review

EKD - Bulgarian Orthodox Church

- a) Daniel Benga, Assessment of the Dialogue between the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical Church in Germany
- b) Reinhard Thöle, The Dialogues of Evangelical Church in Germany with the Orthodox Churches. A Preliminary Review

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland - Russian Orthodox Church

- 
- a) Juhani Forsberg, Evaluation and reception of the dialogues between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and Orthodox Church
- Evangelical Lutheran Church - Orthodox Church of Finland
- a) Kalevi Toiviainen, The discussions between the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and the Finnish Orthodox Church, 1989-2007
  - b) Pekka Metso, Evaluation on the dialogue between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Orthodox Church of Finland
- CPCE - Eastern Orthodox
- a) Ciprian Burlacoiu, Evaluation of the Dialogue between Representatives of the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe and Orthodox Theologians Orthodox Position
  - b) Friedericke Nüssel, Evaluation of the dialogue between the CPCE-Churches and the Orthodox Churches of CEC
- Porvoo-Eastern Orthodox
- a) Ionut-Alexandru Tudorie, Theological Dialogue between the Eastern Orthodox Churches and Porvoo communion
  - b) Matti Repo, A Quick Glance on the Eastern Orthodox-Porvoo Dialogue from 2005 to 2008.
  - c)
- <sup>6</sup> Jackson, D., "Missional Church – European Perspectives", in Matthey, J., *Come Holy Spirit, Heal and Reconcile!*, WCC, Geneva, 2008
- "Pax Europa: Crux Europa" in Yates, T. (Ed.), *Mission and the Next Christendom*, Cliff College Publishing, Calver, 2006
- "Von Lausanne nach Athen: Europäische Mission in ökumenisch-evangelikaler Begegnung", in *Europa : Christen, Kirchen, und Missionen: Jahrbuch Mission 2006*, Missionshilfe Verlag, Hamburg, 2006
- "Church attendance and community strength in Georgia" in *East-West Church & Ministry Report*, Vol 14. No.1, Winter 2006,
- "Experimentation in Worship: A Georgian Baptist Case Study" in *East-West Church & Ministry Report*, Vol 13. No.3, Summer 2005, Birmingham AL
- "From Strangers to Friends: the Churches in Europe in their encounter with the Global South" in *Encounters Mission Ezine* Issue 9, December 2005
- "Mission and the Orthodox Churches", in *St. Francis magazine*, No. 2, September 2005
- "Beyond the Preamble: searching for God in a secularising Europe" in *Encounters Mission Ezine* Issue 6, June 2005
- "Living beyond the preamble: naming Jesus Christ in a New Europe" in *Connections: resourcing ecumenism and mission* Vol 8, Issue 3, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, 2004
- "The Social context for Church membership" in *Membership*, Baptist Union of Great Britain, Didcot, 2004
- Thomas, R., "Counting People in: Changing the way we think about Membership and the Church", review article in *Regent's Reviews* 23, Spring 2004
- <sup>7</sup> "Europe – the religious context", Redcliffe College Mission Consultation, Gloucester, December 2005
- "The Next Christendom in European Perspective", Doctoral Collegium: missiological section, Debrecin University, Hungary, August 2005
- "Pax Europa : Crux Europa", British and Irish Association of Mission Studies Conference, Belfast, July 2005
- "From strangers to friends: the churches in Europe and their encounter with the global south" Synaxeis paper, WCC Conference for World Mission and Evangelism, Athens, May 2005
- "The Missional Church: a European perspective" Synaxeis paper, WCC Conference for World Mission and Evangelism, Athens, May 2005
- "Mission as proselytism and the rhetoric of identity: a question of ethics or theology?" Centre for the Study of World Christianity, Cambridge, United Kingdom, May 2005
- "Beyond the Preamble: searching for God in a secularising Europe", 3rd International Lausanne Researchers' Conference, Cyprus, April 2005

---

“How to say ‘G-SUS’ in a secularising Europe” General Secretaries’ Conference of the European National Councils of Churches, Bratislava, March 2005. Also joint Annual Meeting of the Finnish Council of Churches and the Finnish Missionary Council, Helsinki, November, 2005

“Living beyond the Preamble: naming Jesus Christ in a New Europe”, Churches Commission on Mission annual Members’ meeting, London, October, 2004

<sup>8</sup> *The Future of Theology in Europe Report on the Consultation of the Theological Faculties in Europe*, Graz, Austria, 4-7 July 2002, edited by Prof. Dr Viorel Ionita, Prof. Dr Gerhard Larcher and Prof. Dr Grigoriou Larentzakis, Geneva, 2003, 112 pp

<sup>9</sup> Part A of the HoM A process was supported by: The Evangelical Church in Germany, the Evangelical Regional Church in Württemberg, the Evangelical Church in Hessen/Nassau, the Evangelical Churches in Westphalia, Rhineland, und Baden, ‘Kirchen Helfen Kirchen’, Gustav-Adolf-Organisation, Inter-church Aid of the Evang. Churches in Switzerland, the United Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Germany, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the Evangelical Diaspora foundation, the Martin-Luther-Federation, Priests United, Lions Club Schwenningen, the Sunlife foundation, the Konrad Adenauer foundation

<sup>10</sup> The results of the conference have been published as “Healing of Memories indecarea Memoriei între biserici, culturi i religii în România” and in the German translation as “*Reconciliatio nr. 2 : Die Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen aufarbeiten - Healing of Memories zwischen Kirchen, Kulturen und Religionen - Ein Versöhnungsprojekt der Kirchen in Rumänien*”

<sup>11</sup> Part B of the process of HoM is supported by: the Evangelical Church in Germany, the Evangelical Regional Church in Württemberg, the Evangelical-Lutheran Regional Church of Hanover, the Church of Norway, the Lutheran Church of Finland, Kirchen Helfen Kirchen, Kerkinactie. Tavola Valdese, the Roman-Catholic Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart. Others asked are: the Otto Per Mille Foundation and Renovabis

<sup>12</sup> In Transylvania on 30th March *one* inter-confessional bishops’ conference was held, between all the historic churches. The bishops of the Lutheran, Reformed, Orthodox, Roman-Catholic, and Greek-Catholic churches together decided it was time to pass from the historic to the pastoral and inter-cultural part of the process

<sup>13</sup> Training-centres from the following churches have agreed to participate:

- The Evangelical-Lutheran Regional Church of Hanover
- The Evangelical-Lutheran Regional Church in Württemberg
- The Church of Norway
- The Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Finland
- Tavola Valdese
- The Roman-Catholic Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart

Others participating are:

- The Pastoral Institute Kecskemet/Hungary
- Instituto di Studi Ecumenici “San Bernardino” Venezia
- The Society for Intercultural Pastoral Care and Counselling SIPCC has been asked to be responsible for the general Professional coordination.

Elements of the course will include:

- Healing of Memories as a challenge to the churches in Transylvania
- Telling one’s own story
- Foundations of communication in church and society
- Inter-cultural and inter-confessional identity and consciousness
- Practice of group leadership in an inter-confessional and inter-cultural context.

<sup>14</sup> ***Publications on Healing of Memories in Romania:***

*Healing of Memories – Dialog über die gemeinsame Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen in Rumänien*, epd-Dokumentation Nr. 40 / 2005, Evangelischer Pressedienst, Frankfurt/M 2005

*History of Relation between Christian Churches in Transylvania*, edited by Dieter Brandes, Cluj-Napoca 2006

---

*Reconciliatio nr. 1: Healing of Memories in Europe - A Study of Reconciliation between Churches, Cultures and Religion*, edited by Dieter Brandes, Cluj Napoca – Leipzig 2007  
*Reconciliatio nr. 2 : Healing of Memories indecarea Memoriei între biserici, culturi i religii în România*, hrsg. Dieter Brandes and Dr Olga Lukacs, Cluj Napoca 2007; translation into German:: *Die Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen aufarbeiten - Healing of Memories zwischen Kirchen, Kulturen und Religionen in Rumänien*, hrsg. Dieter Brandes, Cluj Napoca – Leipzig 2008

**Articles on Healing of Memories in Romania (selection):**

*Heilendes Erinnern – ein Dialog über die Geschichte der christlichen Kirchen in Rumänien*, Karl Schwarz in *Biblos – Beiträge zu Süd-Ost-Europa*, Wien 2007, S. 125-144  
*Healing of Memories – eine Aufgabe ökumenischer Ekklesiologie im 21. Jahrhundert*, Dieter Brandes in *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai, Tehologia Reformta Transylvanica*, XLVIII, 2003/5-6. S. 57-63  
*Healing of Memories zwischen christlichen Kirchen und Kulturen in Rumänien*, Dieter Brandes in „Kirchliche Blätter der Evangelischen Kirche A.B. in Rumänien“, Hermannstadt, 34. Jahrgang Nummer 7, hrsg. Das Landeskuratorium der Evangelischen Kirche A.B. in Rumänien  
*Healing of Memories (HoM) - Ein ökumenisches Versöhnungsprojekt in Rumänien*, Dieter Brandes in *Evangelische Orientierung, Zeitschrift des Evangelischen Bundes*, Bensheim 4/2006  
*Versöhnung der Konfessionen in Europa - Healing of Memories – Gemeinschaftsprojekt von GEKE und KEK*, Dieter Brandes in „Dokumentationsband 6. Vollversammlung der Gemeinschaft Evangelischer Kirchen in Europa, Budapest, 2006  
*Gemeinschaft gestalten - der Auftrag der evangelischen Kirchen in Europa*, Frankfurt a.M. 2007, S. 152 – 156  
“*Healing of Memories as part of the reconciliation work of the churches in Europe*”, in *Monitor – News from the Conference of European Churches*, April 2008, Geneva, S. 9