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Foreword:

The Perceptions of Science by Calvinists, Lutherans, Unitarians and Religious Dissents in East-Central Europe from Seventeenth Century Till Today

The outcome of *this special issue* which was made possible by a generous support by John Templeton Grant administered through Oxford University enabled the Principal Investigator, Prof. Dr. Ábrahám Kovács to launch a project in Science and Faith in East-Central Europe in 2023. The research focused on how the relationship between science and Christian faith of Calvinists, Lutherans, Unitarians and Religious Dissenters has been perceived and conceptualised in Hungary, Slovakia, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia. Therefore, the project sought to investigate how Protestants from various Christian standpoints, theological and philosophical convictions related to science in East-Central European region from the 17th century till today.

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During the course of research, that included several conferences, participants learned a lot from one another. Furthermore, Prof. Matthew D. Eddy from Durham University gave excellent critical pieces of advice to the researchers as to how to conduct their research to which I express my heartfelt gratitude. Special thanks to scholars from University of Edinburgh, Stockholm University and University of Glasgow who also gave useful guidance and suggestions how to lead the research project. In particular I am deeply indebted to the kind suggestions made by Professors Scott Spurlock and J. S. Brown. In Hungary, professor Botond Gaál kindly directed my attention to facts that were unknown about the famous Hungarian scholar István Hatvani. Finally, it is my pleasure to express my sincere thanks for Dr. Samuel Hughes and other scholars from Oxford who encouraged me and our research team to pursue this new road which was full of exciting discoveries. Most of the scholars were able to carry out their projects to the end, However, some of them had to decline their commitments to the project for unseen obstacles which I sincerely regret. All in all, the project was a great success and new discoveries were made which the readers may well find informative and thought-provoking. The current results show a wide array of contributions from scholars who pursue their academic careers in Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. The original research papers investigate Reformed (Pósaázy, Hatvani, Sárközy), Unitarian (Körmöczy) scientist and theologians from historical Transylvania (today Romania), Upper Hungary (today Slovakia), Transtibiscian Reformed Diocese of Hungary interior as well as Lutheran scholars from the Kingdom of Hungary from the Zipser German, Hungarian and Slovakian-speaking areas throwing light indirectly on the multicultural and multifaceted social-cultural and religious reality of the region. The issue consists of three subsections entitled as Cartesianism, Wolffianism and Personal Faith, Education, Enlightenment and Natural Sciences and Modern Reflections on Darwin, Creation and Evolution from East-Central Europe. The beautiful and exciting blend of original research findings either about the meeting points between faith and reason, or contemporary reflections on Darwinism and modern science show how Western scientific knowledge was transferred and reshaped by scholars residing and working in the region who were excellent natural philosophers, physicians, chemists, mathematicians and scientists from trying to fathom the mysteries of the encounter between science and faith.