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Editorial

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Editorial

“Chinese Christian Identities in a Wounded World” builds further a series of special publications in our journal which seeks to thematize issues related to mission studies through specific regional, linguistic, historical, and cultural lenses. Last year’s special issue was on “Black/African Transatlantic Voices in Mission Studies” (*Mission Studies* 38.3). As the titles of these two issues indicate, the intention of the series is not to nurture any kind of methodological nationalism or tribalism, but to critically highlight contexts which disclose the challenges of theory building in mission studies.

Chinese Christian Identities call attention to the fact that “Chineseness is experienced, constructed, nurtured, and envisioned by different groups, in different places, and with different purposes” (Nagy 2010:76). Moreover, “Chineseness, or being Chinese, is a major identity marker for many people around the world. How this identity marker is spelled out in lifestyles, world views, individual, communal, and corporal practices, in social, political, and economic arenas, remains to be investigated” (Nagy 2010:76). This special issue begins to do just that, by investigating the meanings behind the identity marker “Chinese Christians” and by showing its diversity in locality, language, and lived theology.

This special issue offers the reader a set of studies, arranged in a chronological order, which explores “Chineseness” and its relation to identity formation through different Christian traditions. The fact that the essays published in this issue deal only with material from the last hundred years or so should not make the reader suspect the issue of being temporally narrow-minded, rather it should invite them to approach these essays with critical questions such as: what do we see here in terms of practicing mission studies as a form of applied theology? What kind of categories do these authors work with? How do these categories relate to theory building in mission studies in other contexts? How do these essays conceptualize the notion of mission?

The guest editors of this special issue made a link between this issue and the theme of the IAMS 2022 conference through the concept of “wounded world.” This link also signals the importance of continuing to practice mission studies in the awareness of connectivity, relationality, and approaching the study of Chinese Christian identities within the framework of Christian identities worldwide. This scholarly attitude echoes Paul Kollman’s presidential address

at the IAMS 2022 Assembly: “Christian mission needs to help Christians navigate their woundedness in a wounded world, reminding them that they have a wounded Savior. And mission studies should study how that has happened, is or is not happening, and how it might happen in the future” (Kollman 2022:158).

I commend and thank the work of Xiaoli Yang and Daryl R. Ireland who in their roles as guest editors enrich our journal with fresh language, new perspectives, and thought-provoking argumentations. For many years now, Xiaoli Yang and Mariel Deluca Voth have been devotedly taking care of the translation of the abstracts of our journal in Chinese and Spanish. I also wish to thank Stephanie Wong and Mary Abigail Coleman for language editing the texts. Last but not least, I wish the readers much inspiration while reading these contributions during these times in which discourses on “Chineseness” matter for the entire wounded world.

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