

Editorial
The Globalization of 21st-Century Mission Voices

J. Nelson Jennings

Published in *Global Missiology*, www.globalmissiology.org. July 2018

God lives and works beyond all of our confined understandings. This statement is more than a bland claim that simply draws an obvious philosophical contrast between divine infinity and human finitude. Rather, the statement is a confession that points both to God's magnificence and to the contextually confined character of your, my, every other individual's, and all human communities' senses and conceptions of who God is, how he works, as well as the scope of people with whom he relates. Our attempted confinement of God and his work is true even for those of us who have extensive, multi-contextual experience, e.g., for people who comfortably speak several languages. Far beyond what any of our understandings will allow, God is both unmanageably stupendous in his love, grace, and judgment toward human beings, as well as fully extensive in his engagement with all the peoples of the world.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of interacting with each other as Jesus's worldwide followers is the accompanying enhanced sense we gain of God's greatness, magnificence, and global embrace of all kinds of people - bar none. Left to our own kinds of people, we can know God truly but in far too limited ways. Sharing with each other our relational understandings of God and of his works in various contexts helps us to appreciate just a bit more how truly magnificent God is. As the Apostle Paul put it, "through the [many-sided] church" God's "manifold wisdom" is "now made known" (Ephesians 3:10).

This issue of *Global Missiology - English* serves toward that end of catching varied glimpses of God's "manifold wisdom" through the wide array of 21st-century mission voices that the lineup of authors and articles represent. The fact that this issue is entirely in English is of course a limiting factor, but every contributor could have produced a piece in at least one different language. Thankfully the subjects cover an extensive range of trends, topics, challenges, peoples, settings, and evidences of God's missional pursuit of his world.

The five Featured Articles deal with vitally important contemporary issues, especially for the ever-increasing number of Christians in Africa. Dealing with the ramifications of witch accusations is more prevalent than some of us realize (as a [new report](#) shows). So is the desperate and agonizing need of non-Western Christians to move beyond generations of mixed Western influence and to think as integrated human beings. Evaluating how audio-visual aids are created, used, and received is critical. Interacting well with people of other religious traditions is increasingly incumbent on all Christians. Recognizing the central place in missions of God the Holy Spirit is too easily forgotten by technologically-driven initiatives.

The Research Methodology piece on how Roma Christians are to be understood is of acute importance in our age of electronic reporting and communication overload. Other similar, context-tailored contributions should be forthcoming in coming issues. It is also a special joy to have a Review & Preview section that presents a book introduction and two book reviews. All three volumes addressed deserve widespread attention.

Enjoy!