

## EDITORIAL

Allan H. Anderson

University of Birmingham  
UK  
a.h.anderson@bham.ac.uk

This issue is one of transition, as I hand over the editorship of *PentecoStudies* to Jörg Haustein of SOAS, University of London. Jörg, who completed his PhD in Heidelberg, has been involved in GloPent since its planning meeting in Amsterdam in 2002 between André Droogers, Cees van der Laan, Michael Bergunder and myself. He has been book reviews editor for six years, and even before that assisted Michael in Heidelberg in this work. I can think of no more suitable person to take over the editorship, and I am certain that this journal will be strengthened as a result. After André Droogers, Mark Cartledge and myself, Jörg becomes the fourth editor in the journal's seventeen-year history. We have edited this present volume together, and I use this editorial to look back on the development of the journal during these past few years and offer some reflections on its future.

I have served as editor of the journal for five and a half years, and have overseen eleven issues, including three thematic ones. During this time, the readership of our journal has increased, and we are now listed in the Scopus rankings, the citation ranking currently 69 out of 371 in the Arts and Humanities. I am very grateful for all the support I have received, particularly by the assistant editor Sophie Bremner, who has been managing the journal for several years, the other assistant editors Andy Lord and Richard Burgess, Jörg as reviews editor, and the many peer reviewers, including those on the editorial and advisory boards, who have all been involved in the editorial process. Thank you! Jörg and I have both written the commentary that follows.

As we look toward the future of *PentecoStudies*, a number of challenges lie ahead. The study of Pentecostalism is constantly changing, and while some areas of discussion are rather saturated, there are always new

fields of interest emerging and many areas remain in need of exploration. The group of scholars operating in the study of Pentecostalism also fluctuates quite significantly, especially in the multi-disciplinary nexus that *PentecoStudies* and GloPent are serving. Meanwhile, there seems to be an ever-growing body of publication outlets for research on Pentecostalism, as the field has become established in many scholarly disciplines. For a niche journal like *PentecoStudies*, this means that recruiting original and excellent articles will always require a concerted effort, as we keep building our scholarly community, seek to stimulate new areas of discussion, and fortify the journal's place within the present publishing landscape. *PentecoStudies* has come a long way and moving forward we will continue to build on the journal's specific strengths. These are, first and foremost, its decidedly global outlook, its multi- and interdisciplinary nature, and its preference for the less trodden thematic grounds.

The four articles in this present issue are a case in point. In the first article, Judith Bachmann writes from her ethnographic research in Ibadan, Nigeria, where she examines ideas of witchcraft, and how Pentecostals use witchcraft beliefs as an important discourse to deal with. Although mostly handled as a private affair, the dominating normative discourse taboos witchcraft in public. This is particularly the case with smaller independent Pentecostal churches, where the public condemnation of witchcraft correlates with their members' socioeconomic and educational background, and interestingly, also with their relationship with popular Islam. Witchcraft beliefs are still rampant throughout Africa, and how Pentecostals deal with them is an important subject.

After this, Roman Poplavsky and Vera Klyueva's article turns our eye to Asia, with a study of conversion careers among Pentecostals in West Siberia. Based on the quantitative and qualitative material collected during extensive fieldwork, they present a first picture of a rarely studied region as far as global Pentecostalism is concerned, and engage the literature (including the emergent Russian contributions) on conversion trajectories. In creative dialogue with their material, they offer a typology of conversion, but perhaps an equally important insight of the article is that often various factors and causes influence conversion trajectories as well as the narratives produced about them.

Koji Kawashima's article looks at the history and politics of Pentecostals in Sri Lanka, who form a small, but growing and increasingly embattled minority there. Detailing the historical, political, and socio-economic development of Sri Lanka in recent decades, Kawashima essentially argues that the reasons for Pentecostal growth are also

those affecting their political circumstance, including the rising attacks against Pentecostals. Interestingly, this difficult situation has prompted Pentecostals to increase their efforts in inter-religious dialogue: with a revival of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism, they seek to strengthen their relations with moderate Buddhists as a way of reducing their vulnerability as a religious minority.

The fourth article by sociologists Peter Marina and Michael Wilkinson takes us to North America, and is based on their ethnographic research in a small Afro-Caribbean congregation in Brooklyn, New York. The central question they investigate is how Pentecostal music, speaking in tongues and prayer become spiritual capital and a form of cultural resistance. Key to this resistance is the concept of empowerment, which members use to navigate through the institutionalization and inequalities that characterize modern inner city life, including racism, poverty, and social problems. Pentecostal liturgy thus becomes a means of empowerment for such people and enables them to have control over their everyday lives. In the author's words, "It is the collective roar of the disenchanting".

As always, the issue closes with five book reviews, selected with the same editorial preference as laid out above. With Jörg taking over as general editor, Richard Burgess has agreed to take over the book reviews from him. Richard has served this journal as assistant editor for many years, and we are very pleased that he has agreed to take on a more active role in the journal as well. This is Allan Anderson signing off, and Jörg Haustein taking over ...